Will Eisner
BEST NEW SERIES

BLACK HAMMER™

"An epic, gripping superhero mystery, and a heartfelt meditation on why superheroes matter."
—SCOTT SNYDER

JEFF LEMIRE DEAN ORMSTON

TATE BROMBAL RICH TOMMASO EMI LENOX

DAVE STEWART TODD KLEIN

"I didn't think something could be thrilling and sad at the same time but now there's *Black Hammer* proving me wrong. Amazing, just flat-out amazing."

—Patton Oswalt

"At once an epic, gripping superhero mystery, and a heartfelt meditation on why superheroes matter, *Black Hammer* is easily one of Lemire's best creations. Peopled with fantastic characters like the haunting Colonel Weird and the mysterious Madame Dragonfly—each made wondrously vibrant by Ormston's pen—*Black Hammer* is place you too will find nearly impossible to leave."

—Scott Snyder (*Wytches*)

"Writer Jeff Lemire and artist Dean Ormston crafted a beautiful saga with *Black Hammer* . . . It has quickly become one of Dark Horse Comics' flagship books and the indie series that everyone is talking about."

—IGN

"*Black Hammer* is also a rare book that shows every member of a creative team working at the top of their craft and perfectly in sync with one another."

—*Outright Geekery*

"If you haven't read *Black Hammer,* I highly recommend you head to your nearest local comic book shop and pick it up. It is a brilliant story about loss, identity, love, and growing older."

—*Women Write About Comics*

"I really love the new direction that the story has taken and I can't wait until the next issue comes out. I need more of this creepy world in my life."

—*Impulse Gamer*

On *Cthu-Louise*:
"It's a story very worth telling. [. . .] Maybe the broken heart of an unloved little girl with tentacles will heal our own."

—Doom Rocket

BLACK HAMMER™

GLOBAL PLA

BLACK HAMMER™

LIBRARY EDITION VOLUME 2

AGE OF DOOM, CTHU-LOUISE, & THE WORLD OF BLACK HAMMER ENCYCLOPEDIA

WRITTEN BY **JEFF LEMIRE**

AGE OF DOOM #1–#5 AND #8–#12 ART BY **DEAN ORMSTON**
COLOR ART BY **DAVE STEWART**
LETTERS BY **TODD KLEIN**

AGE OF DOOM #6–#7 ART, COLORS, AND LETTERS BY **RICH TOMMASO**

CTHU-LOUISE ART BY **EMI LENOX**
COLOR ART BY **DAVE STEWART**
LETTERS BY **TODD KLEIN**

THE WORLD OF BLACK HAMMER ENCYCLOPEDIA WRITTEN BY **TATE BROMBAL** WITH **JEFF LEMIRE**
ART BY **DAVID RUBÍN, WILFREDO TORRES, TYLER CROOK, CHRISTIAN WARD,**
TONCI ZONJIC, MATT KINDT, EMI LENOX, RAY FAWKES, BRIAN HURTT, LUCY SULLIVAN,
MARIE ENGER, RICH TOMMASO, SANDY JARRELL, SINA GRACE, AND **DAVE STEWART**

CHAPTER TITLE PAGES BY **DEAN ORMSTON** WITH **DAVE STEWART,**
RICH TOMMASO, EMI LENOX, AND **ANDREA SORRENTINO**

CHAPTER DESIGN PAGES BY **SKOTTIE YOUNG, JEFF LEMIRE, MICHAEL CHO,**
JAMES HARREN, FÁBIO MOON, FAREL DALRYMPLE, CHRISTIAN WARD,
BILL SIENKIEWICZ, SANFORD GREENE, MICHEL FIFFE, PAOLO AND **JOE RIVERA,**
PAUL POPE WITH **DAVE STEWART,** AND **JILL THOMPSON**

COVER BY **DEAN ORMSTON**

DARK HORSE BOOKS

PUBLISHER
MIKE RICHARDSON

EDITOR
DANIEL CHABON

ASSISTANT EDITORS
CHUCK HOWITT
BRETT ISRAEL

DESIGNERS
RICK DeLUCCO
ETHAN KIMBERLING

DIGITAL ART TECHNICIAN
JOSIE CHRISTENSEN

Facebook.com/DarkHorseComics

Twitter.com/DarkHorseComics

Advertising Sales: (503) 905-2315

To find a comics shop in your area, visit comicshoplocator.com.

BLACK HAMMER™

© 2018, 2019, 2020 171 Studios, Inc., and Dean Ormston. Dark Horse Books® and the Dark Horse logo are trademarks of Dark Horse Comics LLC, registered in various categories and countries. All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the express written permission of Dark Horse Comics LLC. Names, characters, places, and incidents featured in this publication either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons (living or dead), events, institutions, or locales, without satiric intent, is coincidental.

This volume collects *Black Hammer: Age of Doom* issues #1 through #12, and the one-shot comics *Cthu-Louise* and *The World of Black Hammer Encyclopedia.*

Published by
Dark Horse Books
A division of Dark Horse Comics LLC
10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222

DarkHorse.com

First hardcover edition: September 2020
Ebook ISBN 978-1-50671-186-7
Hardcover ISBN 978-1-50671-185-0

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Printed in China

NEIL HANKERSON Executive Vice President TOM WEDDLE Chief Financial Officer RANDY STRADLEY Vice President of Publishing NICK McWHORTER Chief Business Development Officer DALE LaFOUNTAIN Chief Information Officer MATT PARKINSON Vice President of Marketing VANESSA TODD-HOLMES Vice President of Production and Scheduling MARK BERNARDI Vice President of Book Trade and Digital Sales KEN LIZZI General Counsel DAVE MARSHALL Editor in Chief DAVEY ESTRADA Editorial Director CHRIS WARNER Senior Books Editor CARY GRAZZINI Director of Specialty Projects LIA RIBACCHI Art Director MATT DRYER Director of Digital Art and Prepress MICHAEL GOMBOS Senior Director of Licensed Publications KARI YADRO Director of Custom Programs KARI TORSON Director of International Licensing SEAN BRICE Director of Trade Sales

SKOTTIE YOUNG 2013

PREVIOUSLY IN *BLACK HAMMER...*

They were the greatest heroes of a lost era: Golden Age crime buster **ABRAHAM SLAM**, interstellar adventurer **COL. WEIRD** and his robot sidekick **TALKY-WALKY**, **BARBALIEN** warlord from Mars, **GOLDEN GAIL**, America's super-sweetheart, **MADAME DRAGONFLY**, mistress of the macabre, and **BLACK HAMMER**, invincible champion of the streets.

Ten years ago the greatest heroes of Spiral City battled a near-omnipotent cosmic despot named **ANTI-GOD** and, in destroying the evil entity and saving the world, the heroes seemingly died as well.

But, unbeknownst to anyone, these colorful superheroes found themselves mysteriously transported to a farm in a small, quiet town... a world where superheroes don't exist.

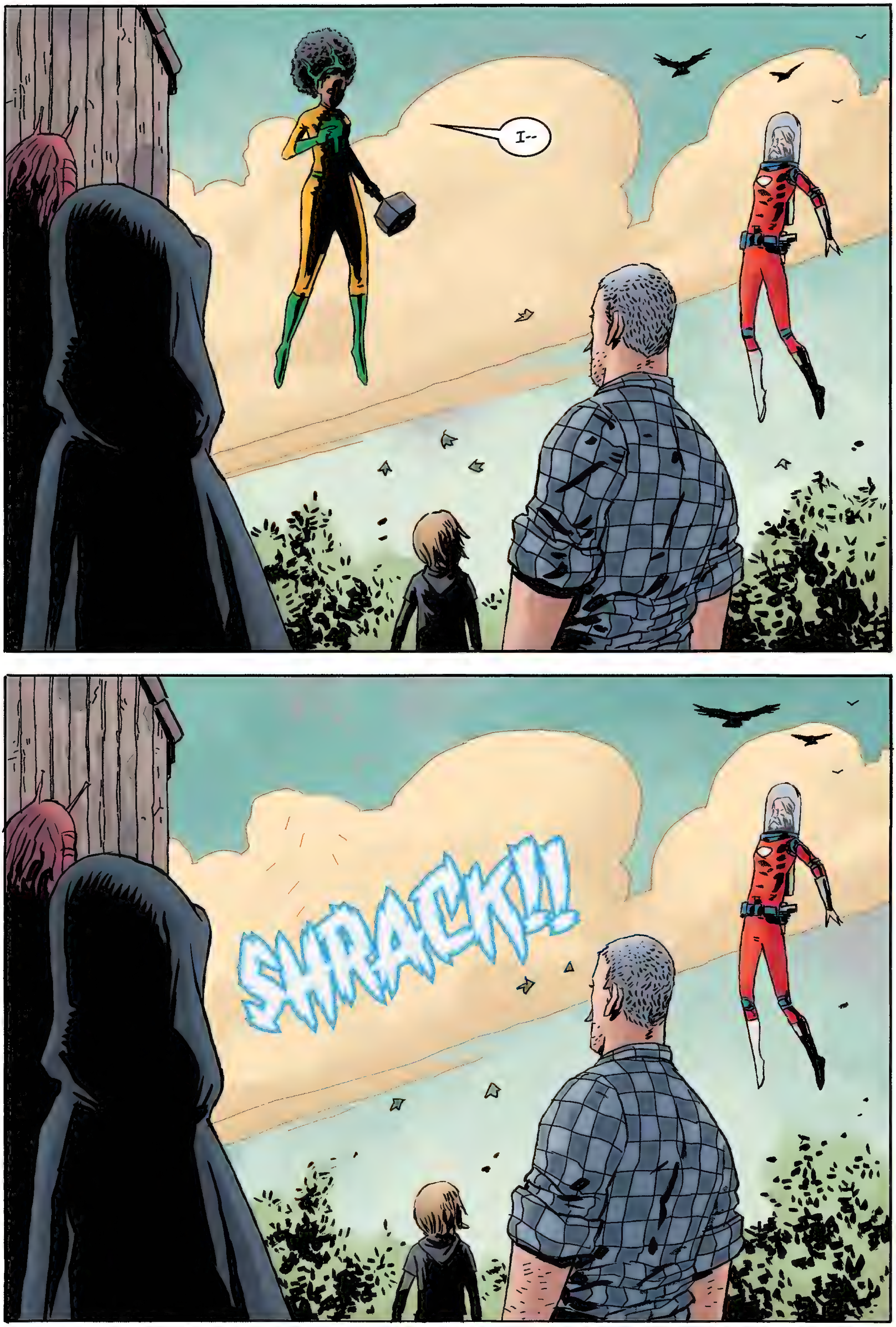
Soon after, the greatest among them, the powerful **BLACK HAMMER**, tried to leave the town's perimeter and was horribly killed by unknown and awful forces. The heroes were trapped. They had no choice but to do their best to hide their true identities and to live on the farm, and in the small town, as a strange surrogate family, all the while trying to solve the mystery of where they were and how they could get home.

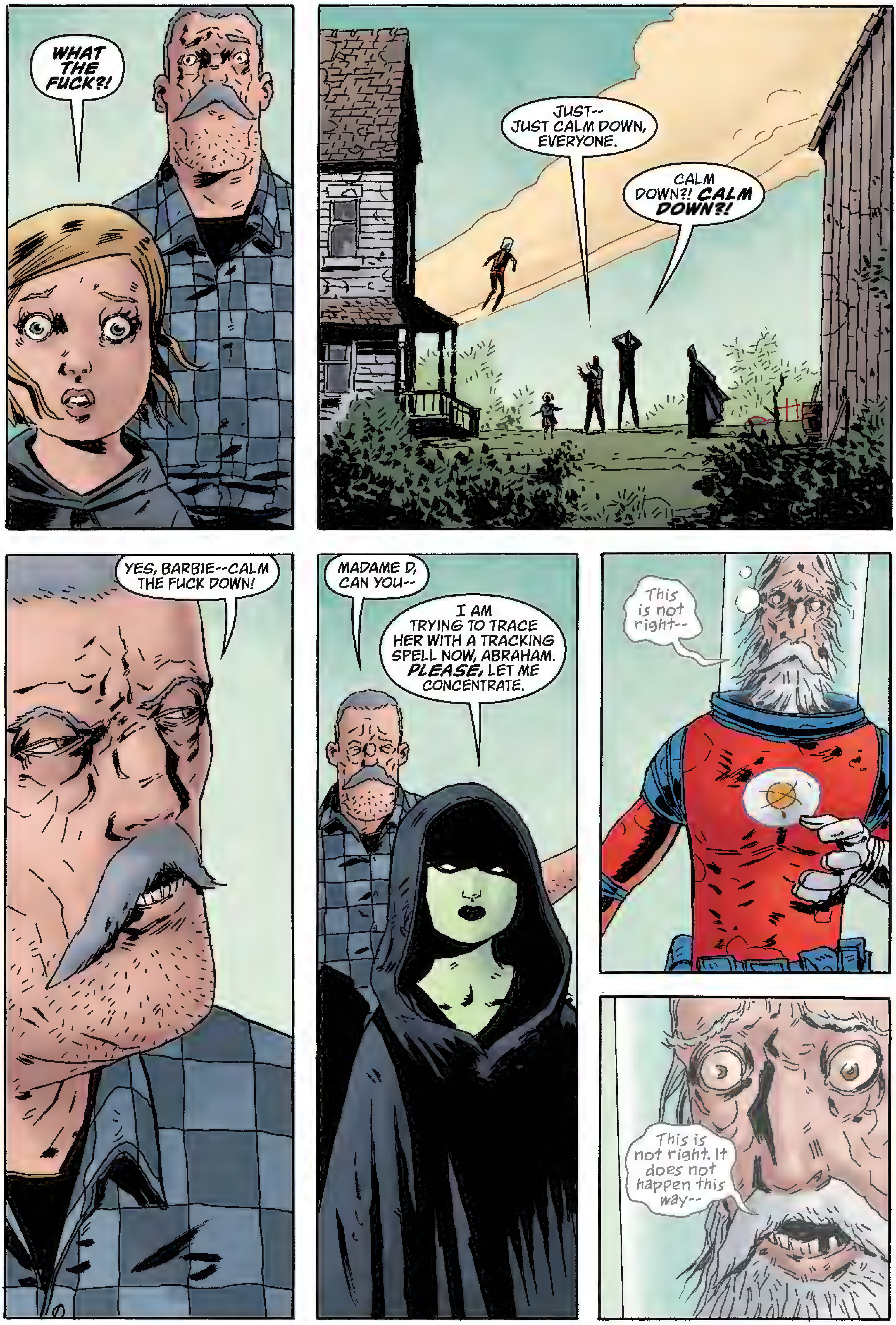
Meanwhile, back in Spiral City, the daughter of Black Hammer, an inquisitive and determined young woman named **LUCY WEBER**, never gave up hope of finding her father and the other heroes. Nearly ten years after he disappeared, Lucy finally picked up his trail and suddenly, unbelievably, she too found herself on the farm. But mysterious **MADAME DRAGONFLY** cast a spell, making Lucy forget how she had gotten there or anything else she had learned.

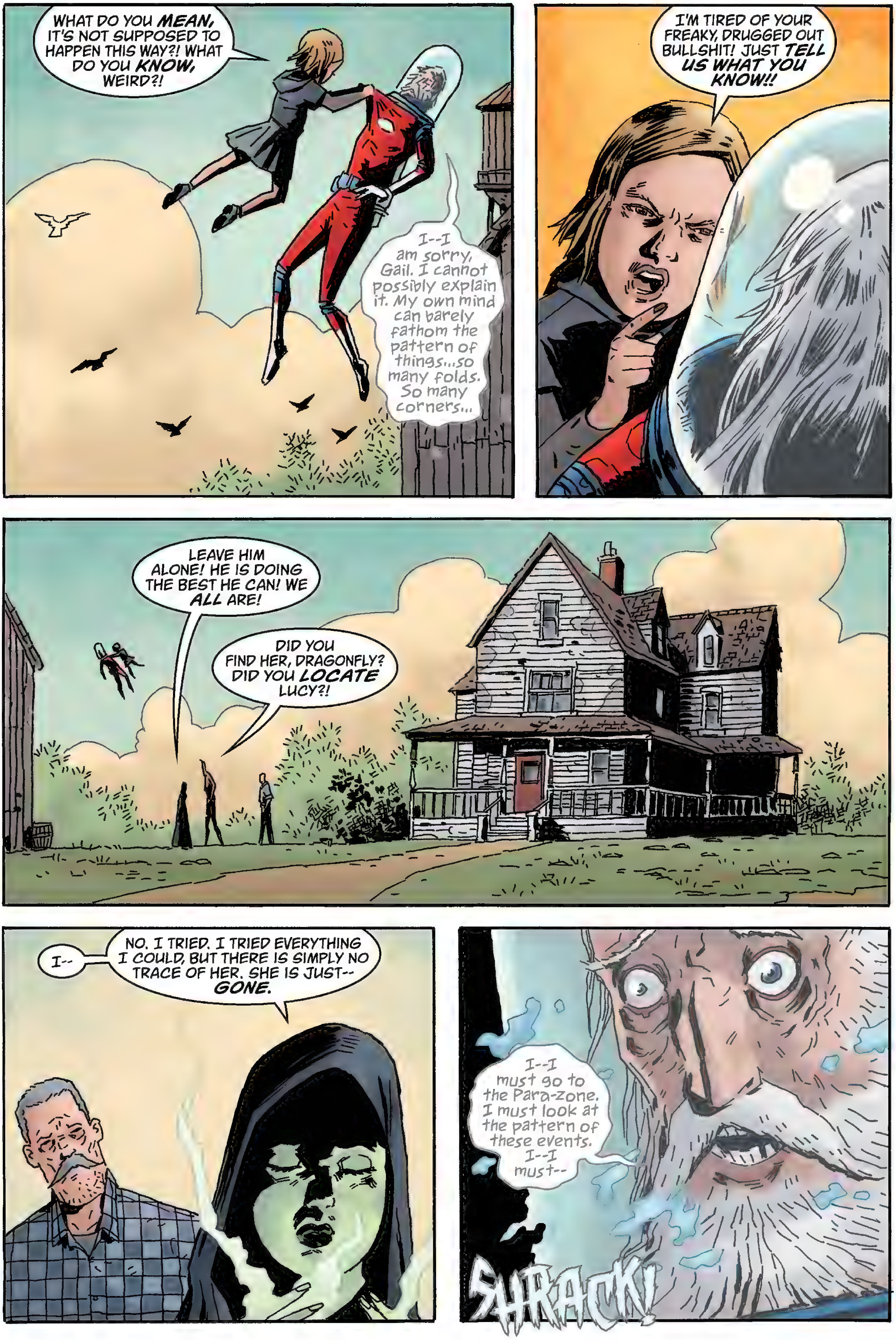
Lucy tried to live with the others on the farm and make the best of it, but she could not stop searching for the truth. And that quest led her to pick up her father's cosmic hammer. Upon grasping the powerful weapon, Lucy Weber was transformed into
THE ALL-NEW BLACK HAMMER!

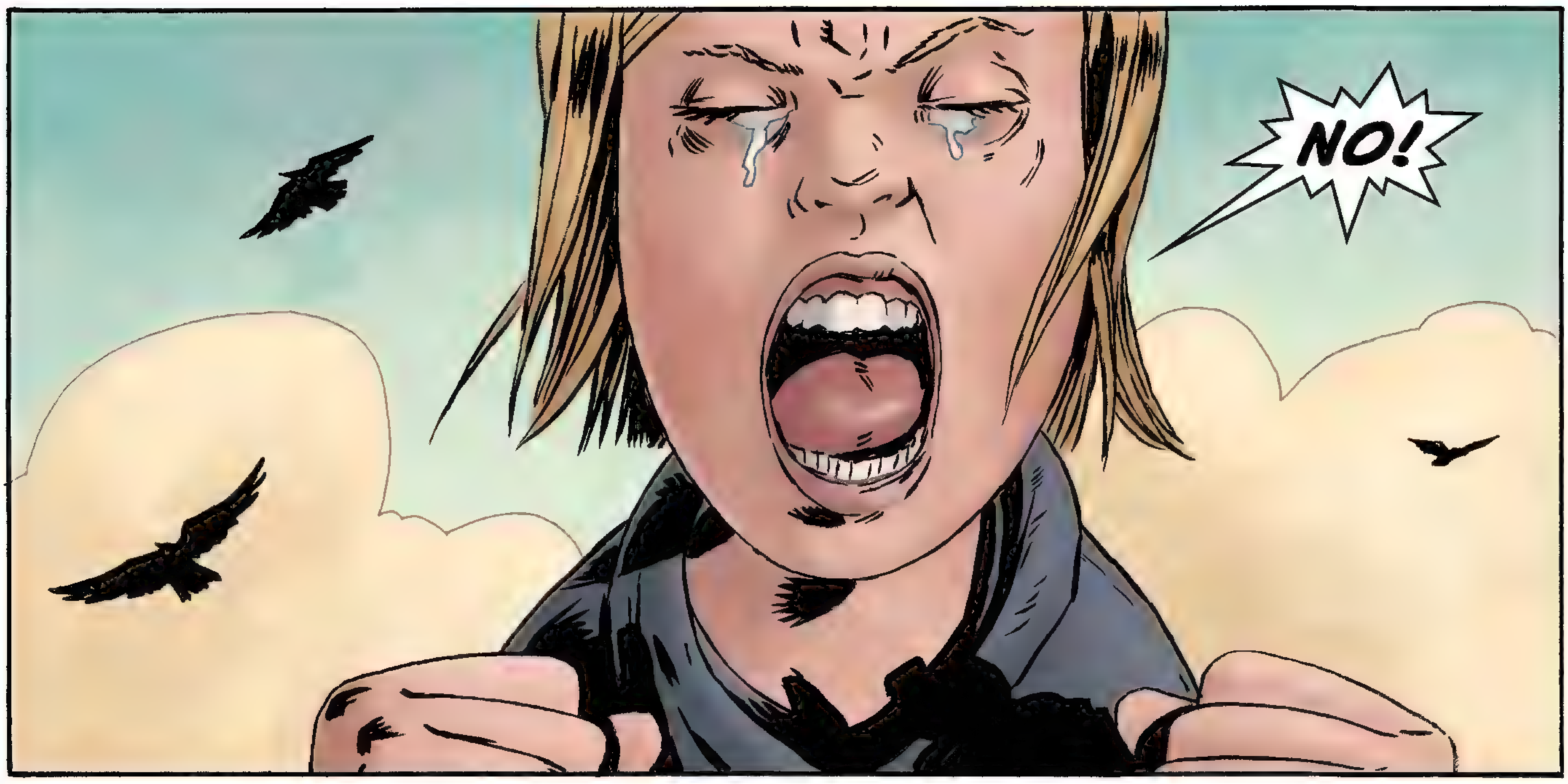
Facing the other stunned heroes, Lucy declared...

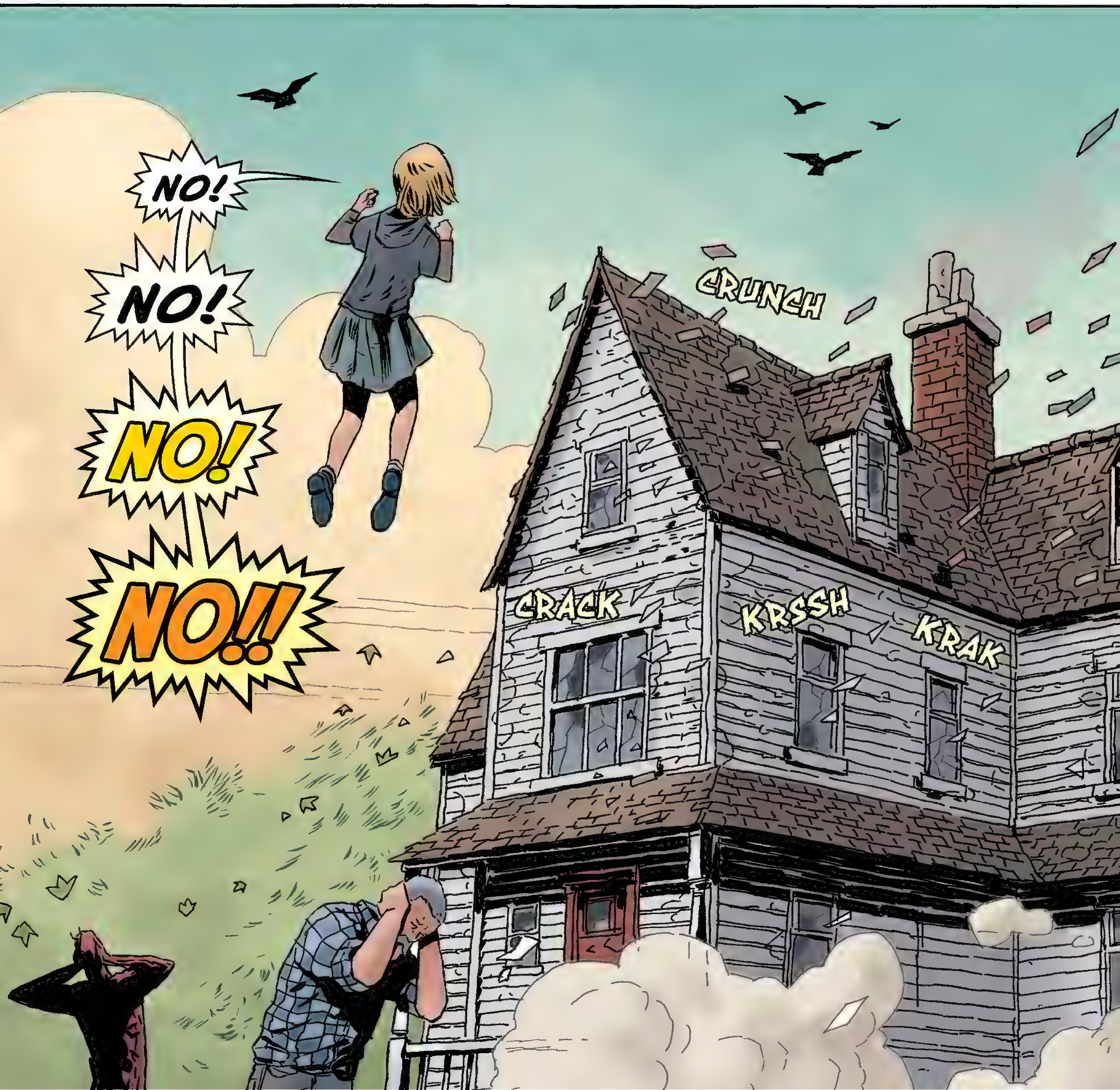
...I REMEMBER *EVERYTHING!* I KNOW *WHERE WE ARE!*
YOU BETTER NOT BE FUCKING WITH ME, KID!
WHAT'S HAPPENING?! LUCY?
OH, GOOD. I'M GLAD YOU TWO ARE HERE. I WAS JUST ABOUT TO TELL THEM WHAT I'VE LEARNED.
AND I'M NOT MESSING WITH YOU, GAIL. I *KNOW* EXACTLY WHAT THIS PLACE IS AND I KNOW *HOW* WE CAN ALL GO BACK HOME...

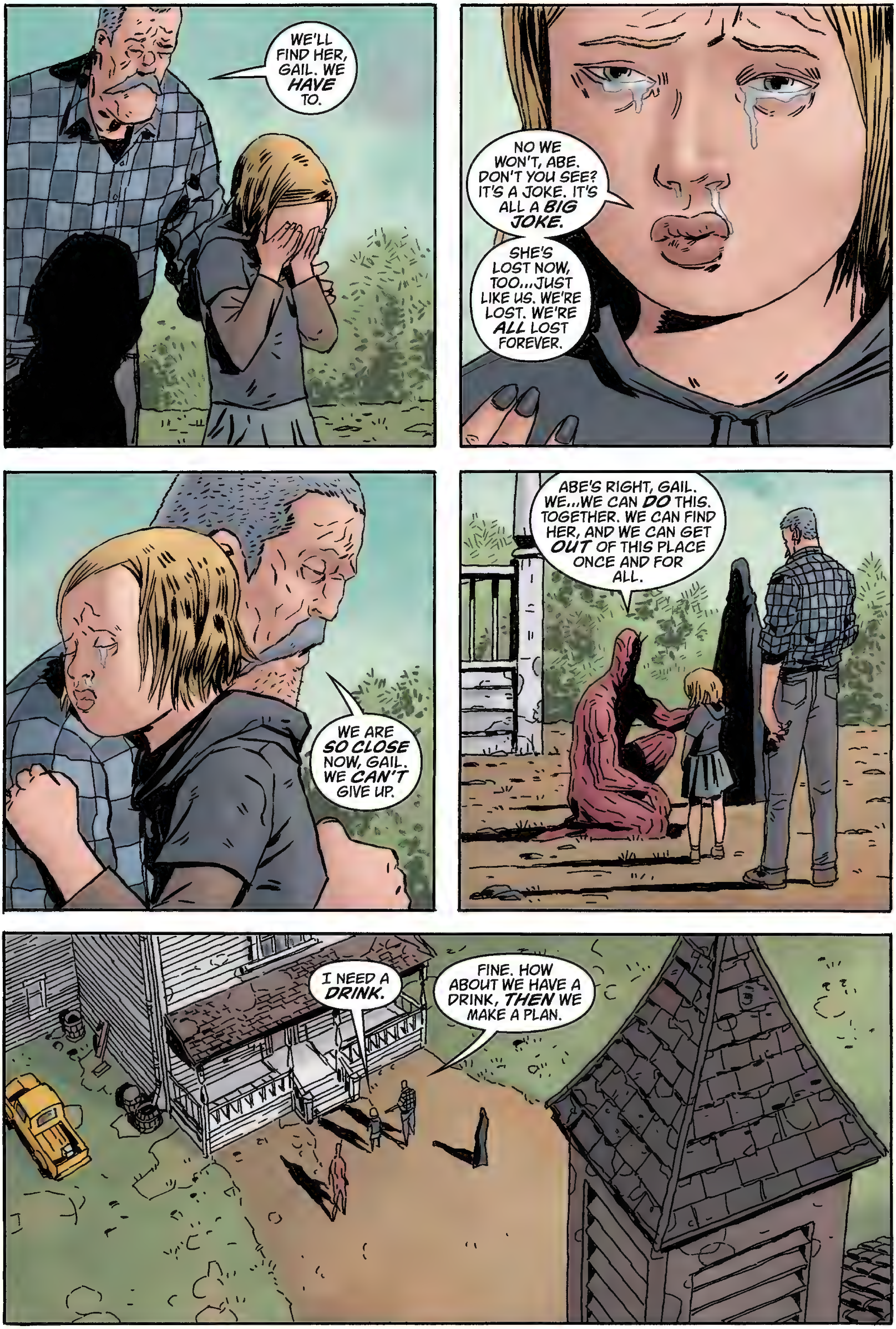

I--
SHRACK!!


WHAT THE FUCK?!
JUST-- JUST CALM DOWN, EVERYONE.
CALM DOWN?! CALM DOWN?!
YES, BARBIE--CALM THE FUCK DOWN!
MADAME D, CAN YOU--
I AM TRYING TO TRACE HER WITH A TRACKING SPELL NOW, ABRAHAM. PLEASE, LET ME CONCENTRATE.
This is not right--
This is not right. It does not happen this way--

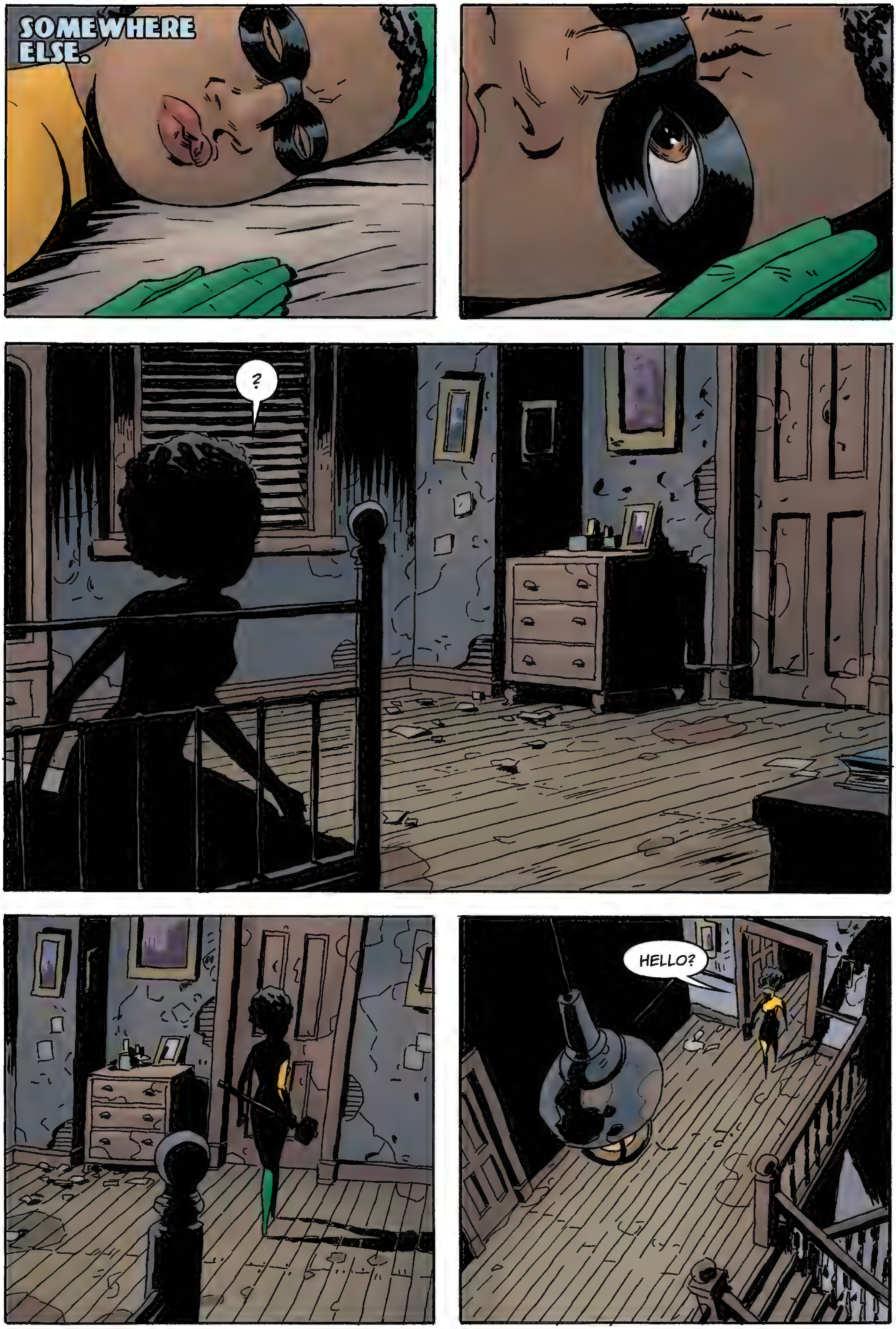

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN THIS WAY?! WHAT DO YOU KNOW, WEIRD?!
I--I am sorry, Gail. I cannot possibly explain it. My own mind can barely fathom the pattern of things...so many folds. So many corners...
I'M TIRED OF YOUR FREAKY, DRUGGED OUT BULLSHIT! JUST TELL US WHAT YOU KNOW!!
LEAVE HIM ALONE! HE IS DOING THE BEST HE CAN! WE ALL ARE!
DID YOU FIND HER, DRAGONFLY? DID YOU LOCATE LUCY?!
I--
NO. I TRIED. I TRIED EVERYTHING I COULD, BUT THERE IS SIMPLY NO TRACE OF HER. SHE IS JUST-- GONE.
I--I must go to the Para-zone. I must look at the pattern of these events. I--I must--
SHRACK!


NO!

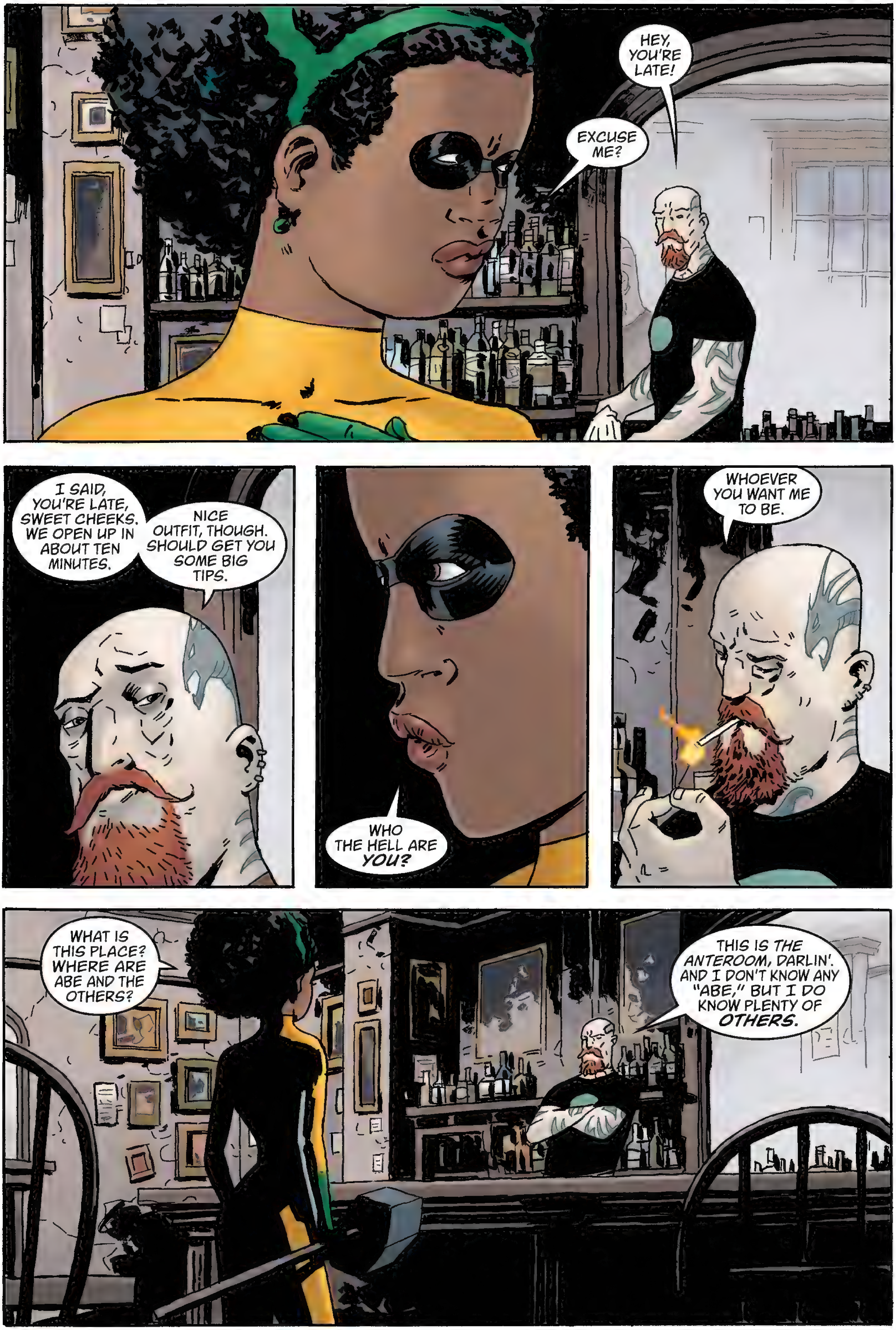

NO!
NO!
NO!
NO!!
CRUNCH
CRACK
KRSSH
KRAK


WE'LL FIND HER, GAIL. WE *HAVE* TO.
NO WE WON'T, ABE. DON'T YOU SEE? IT'S A JOKE. IT'S ALL A *BIG JOKE.*
SHE'S LOST NOW, TOO...JUST LIKE US. WE'RE LOST. WE'RE *ALL* LOST FOREVER.
WE ARE *SO CLOSE* NOW, GAIL. WE *CAN'T* GIVE UP.
ABE'S RIGHT, GAIL. WE...WE CAN *DO* THIS. TOGETHER. WE CAN FIND HER, AND WE CAN GET *OUT* OF THIS PLACE ONCE AND FOR ALL.
I NEED A *DRINK.*
FINE. HOW ABOUT WE HAVE A DRINK, *THEN* WE MAKE A PLAN.

HOW ABOUT WE HAVE **TWO DRINKS** AND THEN WE MAKE A PLAN.
WHAT?
WELL, IT'S JUST THAT--
IT'S JUST THAT YOU HAVEN'T COME IN THE HOUSE IN A WHILE, GOTH QUEEN. WHAT GIVES?
I--I JUST WANT TO HELP.
BETTER MAKE IT **THREE DRINKS.**


SOMEWHERE ELSE.
?
HELLO?

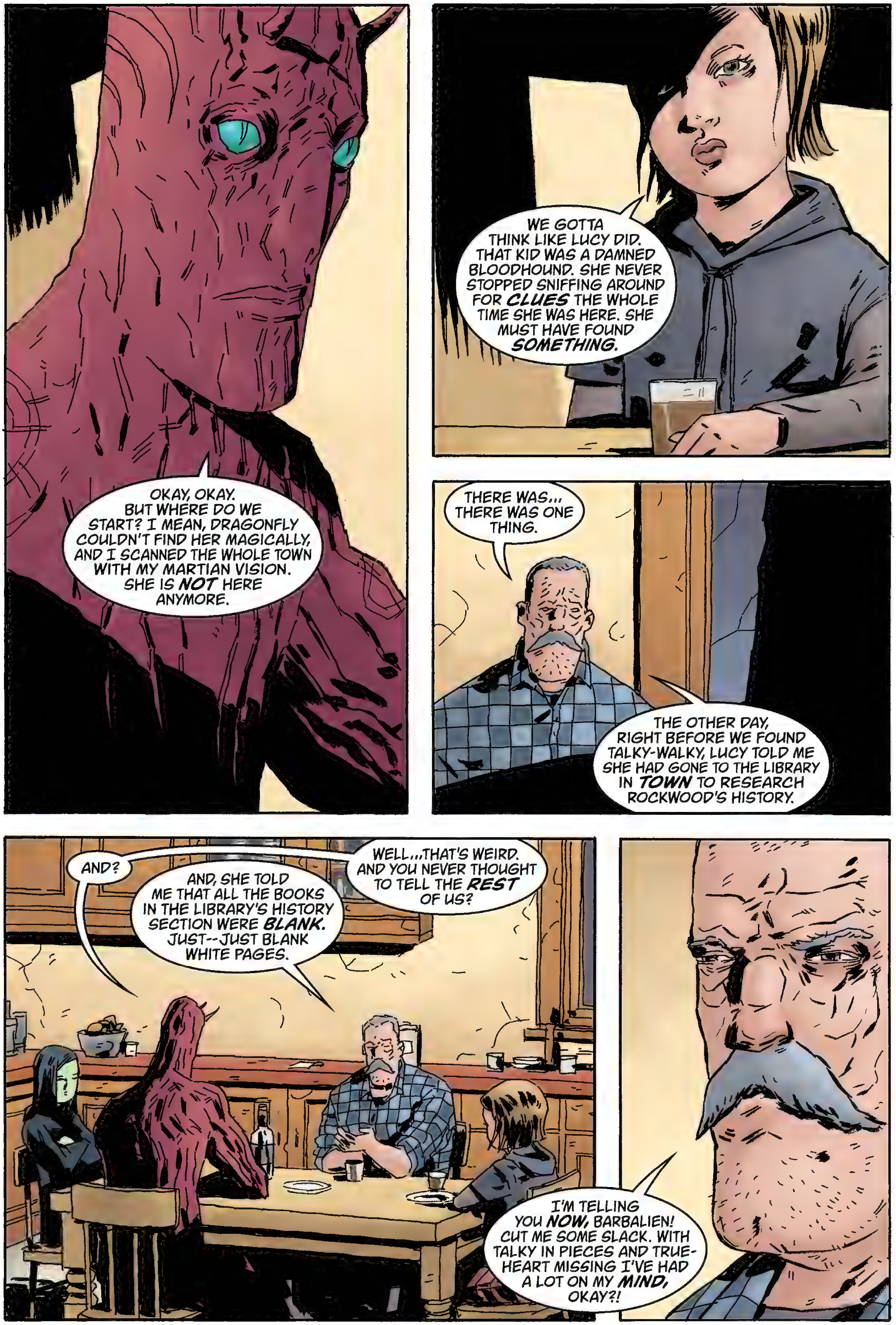
HELLO? ABE? GAIL?
ANYONE?

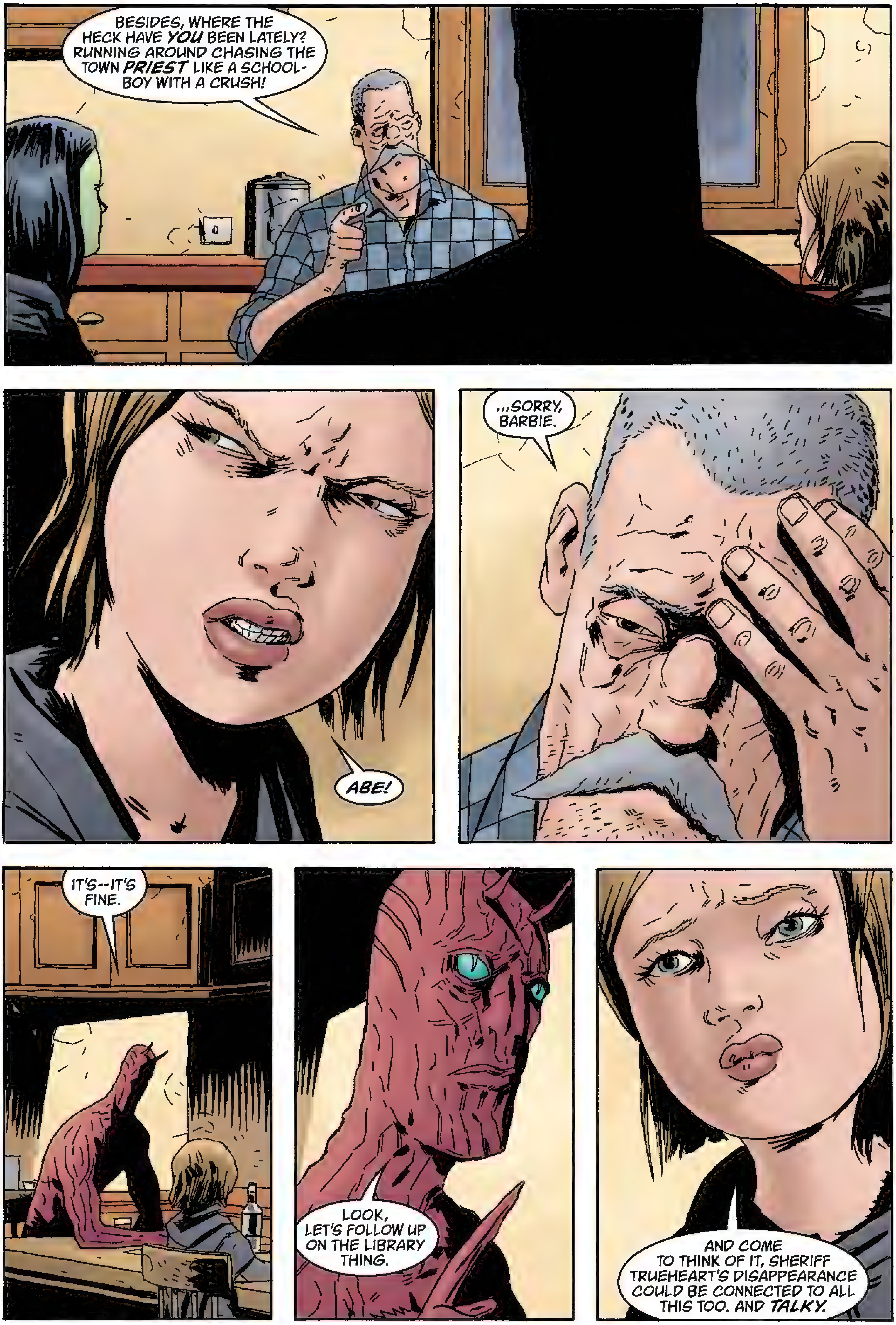

HEY, YOU'RE LATE!
EXCUSE ME?
I SAID, YOU'RE LATE, SWEET CHEEKS. WE OPEN UP IN ABOUT TEN MINUTES.
NICE OUTFIT, THOUGH. SHOULD GET YOU SOME BIG TIPS.
WHO THE HELL ARE *YOU?*
WHOEVER YOU WANT ME TO BE.
WHAT IS THIS PLACE? WHERE ARE ABE AND THE OTHERS?
THIS IS *THE ANTEROOM*, DARLIN'. AND I DON'T KNOW ANY "ABE," BUT I DO KNOW PLENTY OF ***OTHERS.***

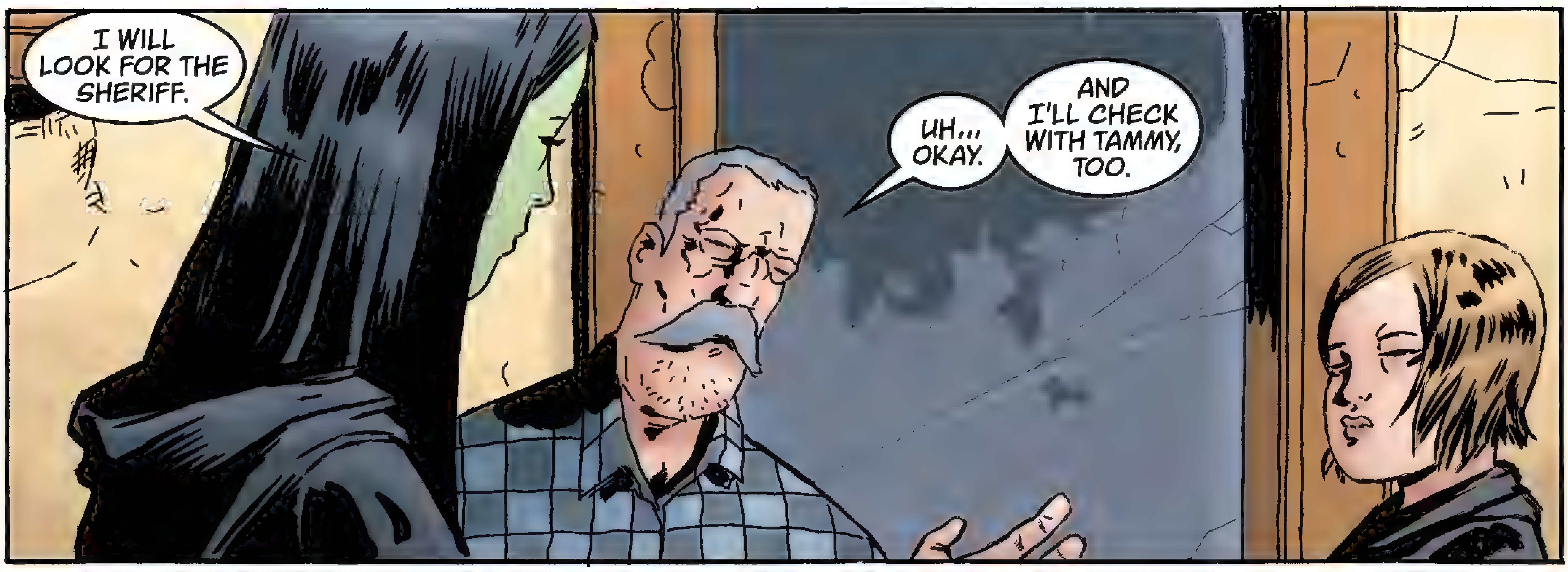
ENOUGH. TELL ME WHO YOU ARE AND WHERE I AM. *NOW.*
RELAX. NO NEED TO START USING *THAT THING* IN HERE. THE NAME IS JAMES...LONNIE JAMES.
AND I ALREADY TOLD YOU, THIS IS *THE ANTE-ROOM.* DODGIEST PUB IN ALL OF EXISTENCE. A MEETING PLACE OF SORTS.
RIGHT, BUT *WHERE* IS THIS? IS IT IN THE TOWN? ROCKWOOD? ARE WE NEAR THE FARM?
FARM? DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY FARM ROUND THESE PARTS.
YOU SAID THIS WAS A MEETING PLACE. A MEETING PLACE FOR *WHOM?*
SEE FOR YOURSELF...

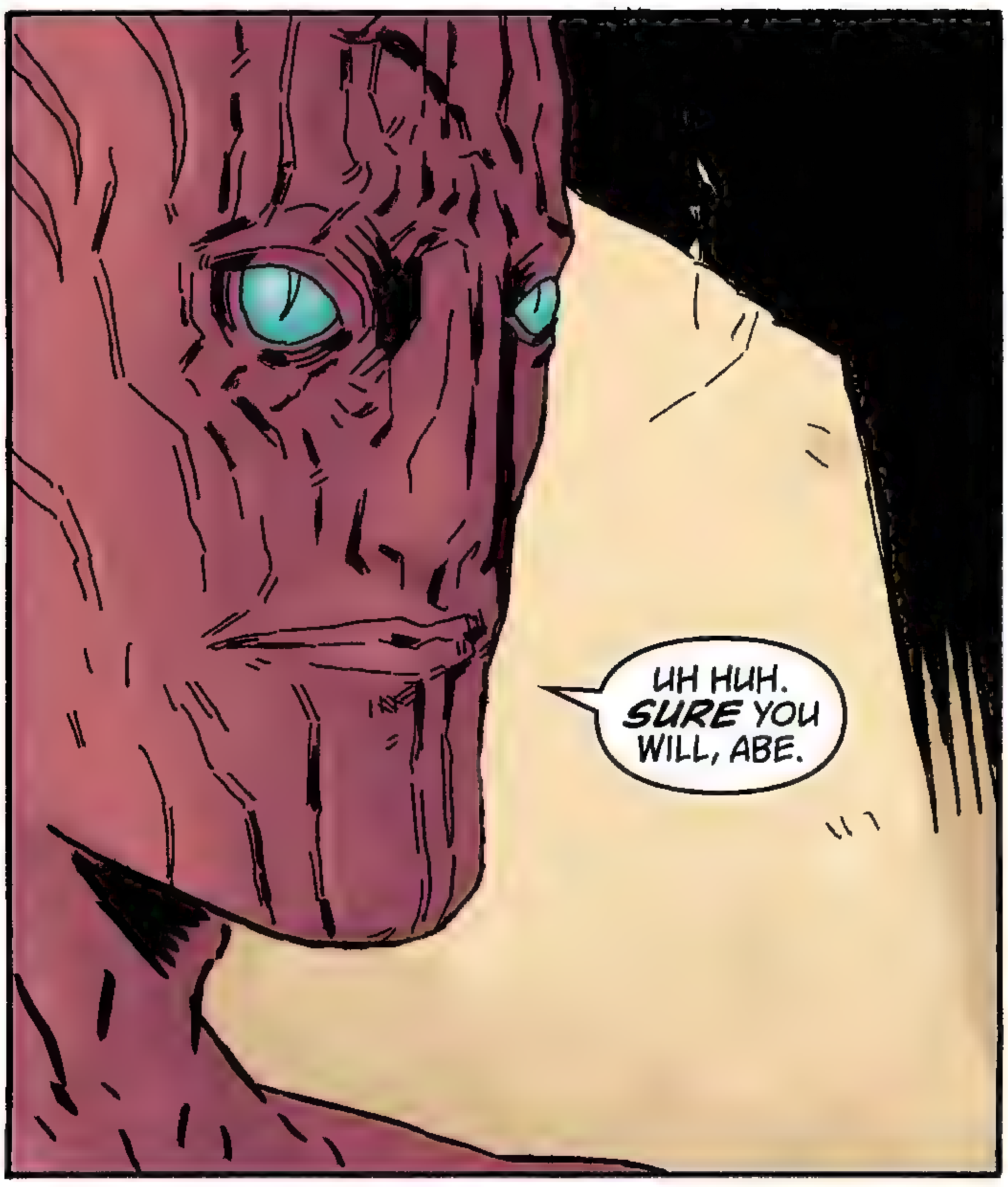
WE'RE THE MONSTERS AND THE GHOULS. THE MISFITS AND THE DELINQUENTS. THE GIFTED AND THE DAMNED...
...WE'RE ALL THE WEIRD ONES, LOVE. AND NOW YOU'RE WITH US.

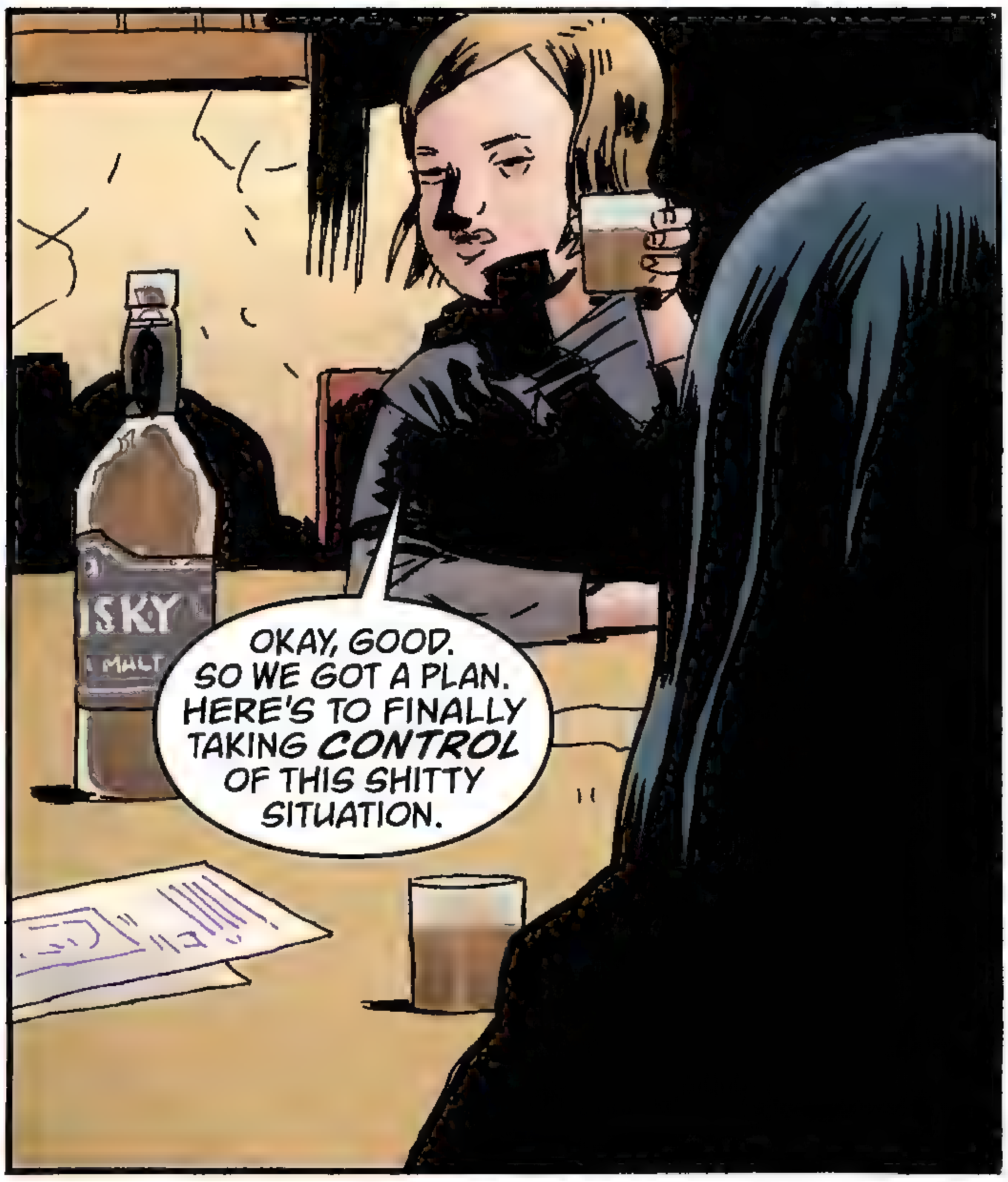
OKAY...SO LET'S LAY OUT EVERYTHING WE KNOW.
THAT SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG.
BARBIE...
WHAT? WE DON'T KNOW ***SHIT,*** ABE! I MEAN--GAIL WAS RIGHT. THIS IS HOPELESS.
NO... NO, IT'S NOT.
ABE WAS RIGHT. WE HAVE NEVER BEEN SO CLOSE.
I ***KNOW*** HOW FRUSTRATED YOU ARE, BARBIE. SO AM I.
BUT IT'S ***NOT*** HOPELESS. NOT ANYMORE. I MEAN, BEFORE LUCY SHOWED UP...YEAH, ***THAT*** WAS HOPELESS. BUT IF SHE WAS RIGHT, IF SHE REALLY DID FIGURE IT ALL OUT, WELL THEN, ***SHE*** IS OUR HOPE. SHE IS OUR TICKET OUT OF HERE.

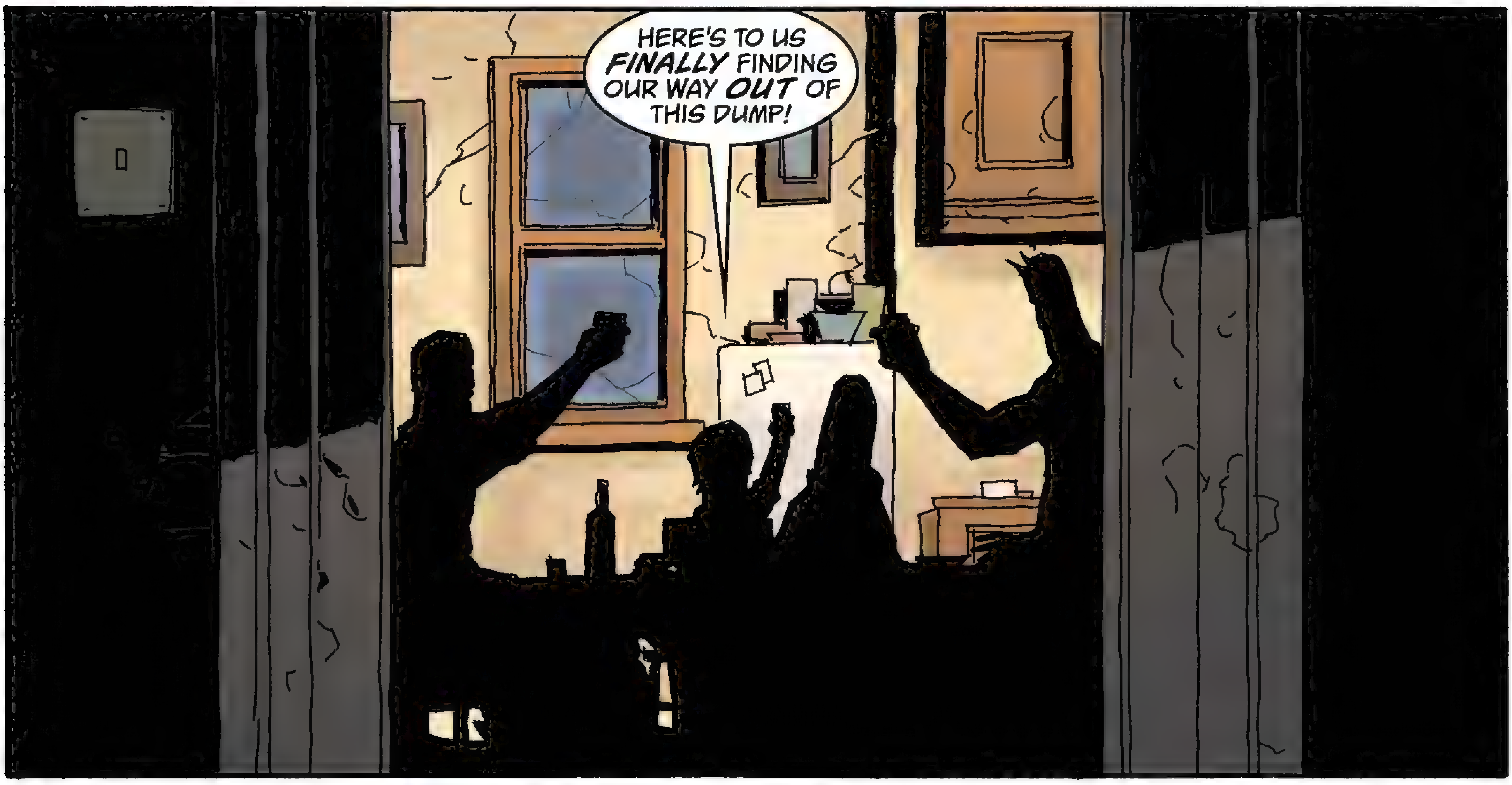

OKAY, OKAY. BUT WHERE DO WE START? I MEAN, DRAGONFLY COULDN'T FIND HER MAGICALLY, AND I SCANNED THE WHOLE TOWN WITH MY MARTIAN VISION. SHE IS ***NOT*** HERE ANYMORE.
WE GOTTA THINK LIKE LUCY DID. THAT KID WAS A DAMNED BLOODHOUND. SHE NEVER STOPPED SNIFFING AROUND FOR ***CLUES*** THE WHOLE TIME SHE WAS HERE. SHE MUST HAVE FOUND ***SOMETHING.***
THERE WAS... THERE WAS ONE THING.
THE OTHER DAY, RIGHT BEFORE WE FOUND TALKY-WALKY, LUCY TOLD ME SHE HAD GONE TO THE LIBRARY IN ***TOWN*** TO RESEARCH ROCKWOOD'S HISTORY.
AND?
AND, SHE TOLD ME THAT ALL THE BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY'S HISTORY SECTION WERE ***BLANK.*** JUST--JUST BLANK WHITE PAGES.
WELL...THAT'S WEIRD. AND YOU NEVER THOUGHT TO TELL THE ***REST*** OF US?
I'M TELLING YOU ***NOW,*** BARBALIEN! CUT ME SOME SLACK. WITH TALKY IN PIECES AND TRUE-HEART MISSING I'VE HAD A LOT ON MY ***MIND,*** OKAY?!


BESIDES, WHERE THE HECK HAVE *YOU* BEEN LATELY? RUNNING AROUND CHASING THE TOWN *PRIEST* LIKE A SCHOOLBOY WITH A CRUSH!
ABE!
...SORRY, BARBIE.
IT'S--IT'S FINE.
LOOK, LET'S FOLLOW UP ON THE LIBRARY THING.
AND COME TO THINK OF IT, SHERIFF TRUEHEART'S DISAPPEARANCE COULD BE CONNECTED TO ALL THIS TOO. AND *TALKY.*

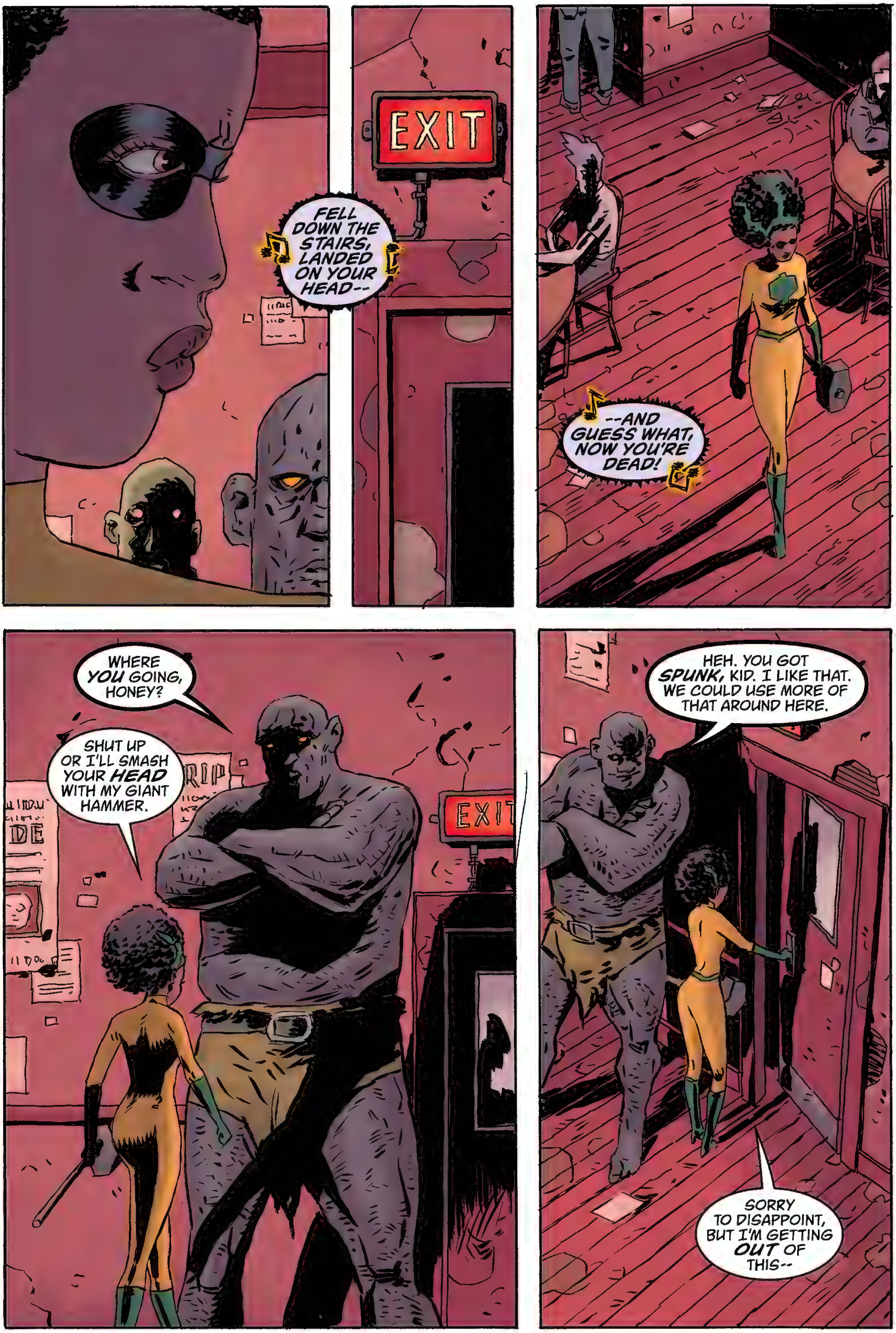

I WILL LOOK FOR THE SHERIFF.
UH... OKAY.
AND I'LL CHECK WITH TAMMY, TOO.

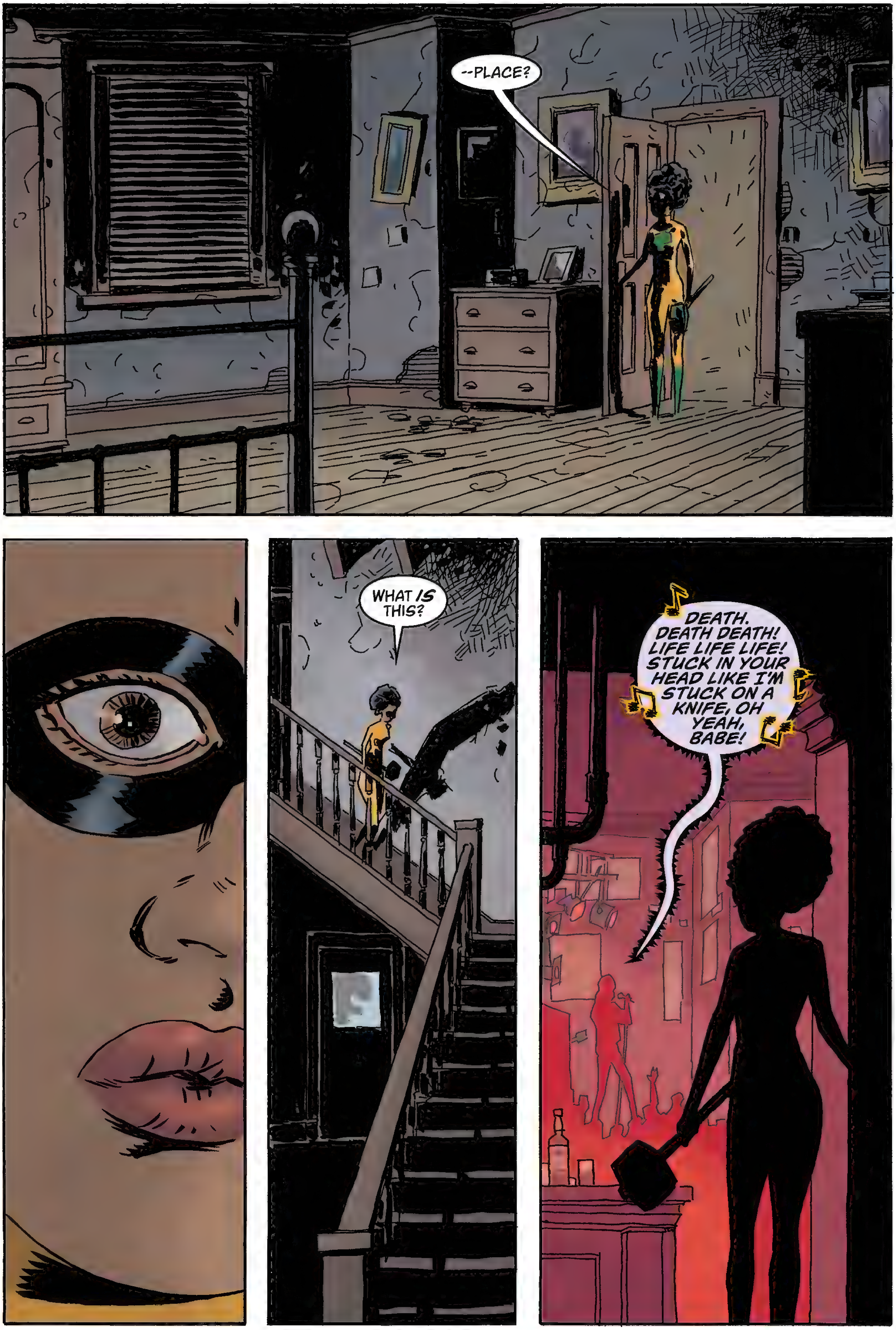

UH HUH. **SURE** YOU WILL, ABE.

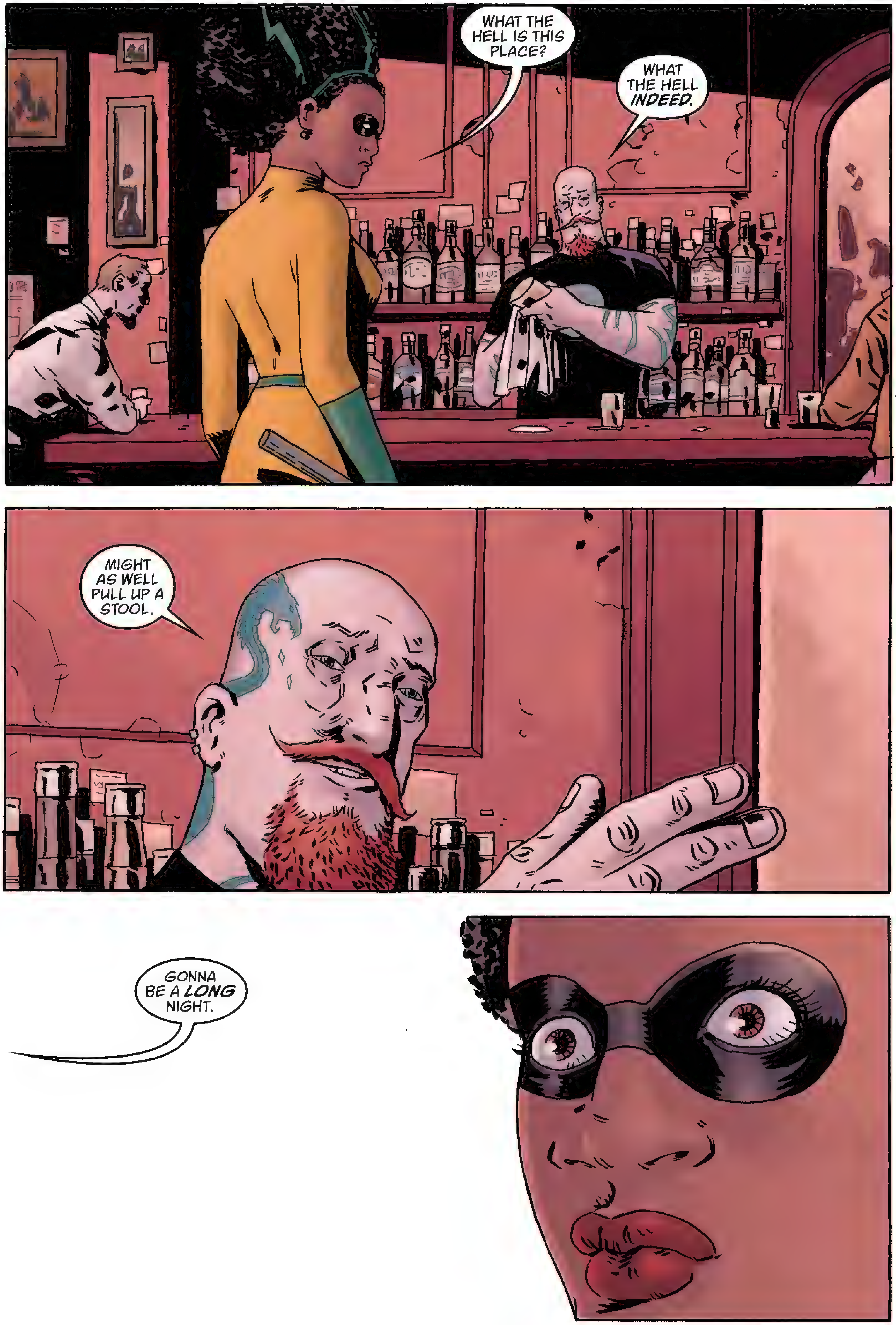

ISKY
MALT
OKAY, GOOD. SO WE GOT A PLAN. HERE'S TO FINALLY TAKING **CONTROL** OF THIS SHITTY SITUATION.


HERE'S TO US ***FINALLY*** FINDING OUR WAY ***OUT*** OF THIS DUMP!

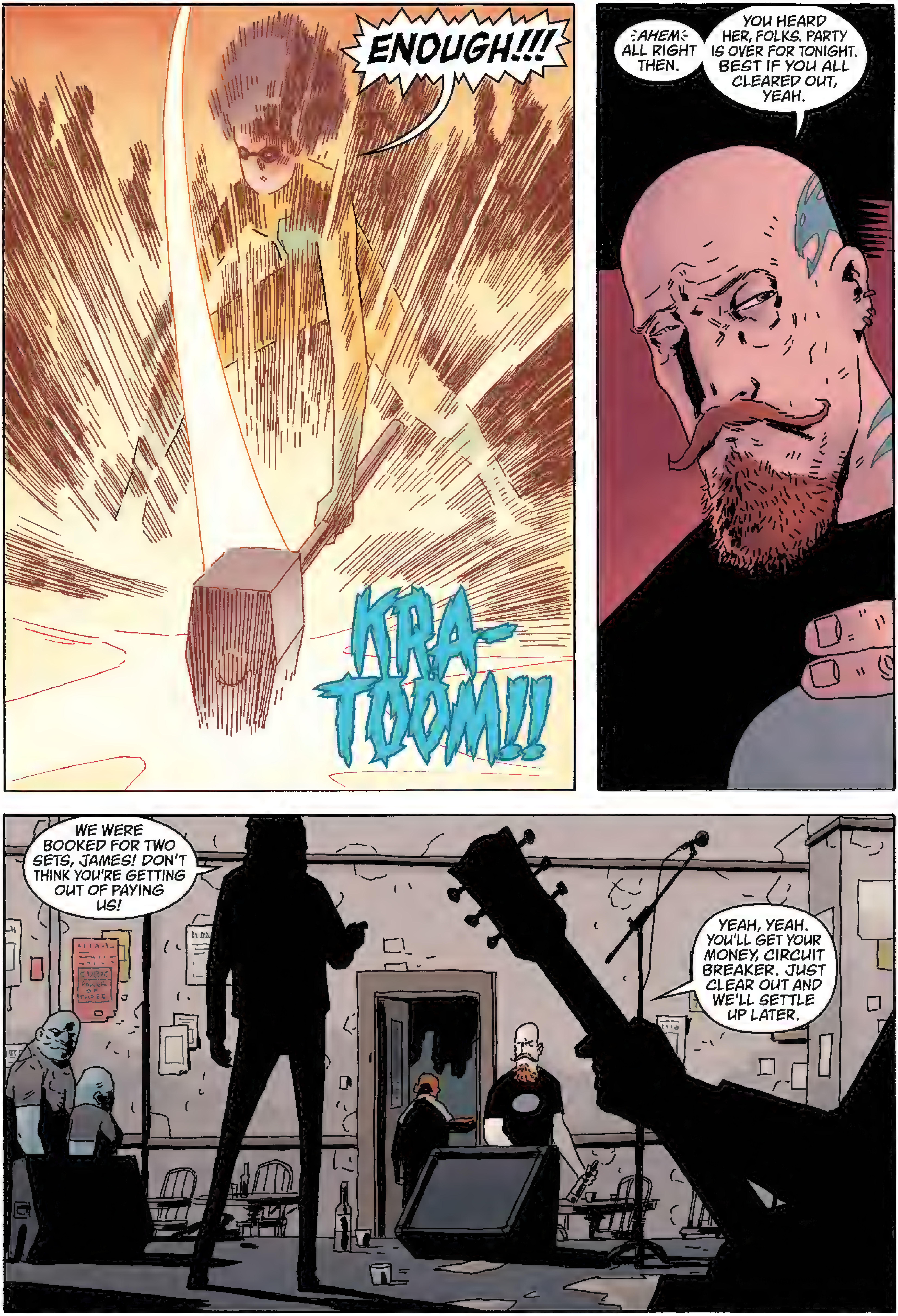
WELCOME BACK TO *THE ANTEROOM,* EVERYONE.
I WANT TO DEDICATE THIS NEXT ONE TO A REAL *SPECIAL LADY* OUT THERE IN THE AUDIENCE TONIGHT, YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
THIS IS A NEW TUNE. IT'S CALLED *"DEATH FROM ABOVE, LIFE FROM BELOW."*
D-D-D-D-DEATH. DEATH DEATH! LIFE LIFE LIFE. FEEL LIKE I'M WALKING ON A KNIFE!

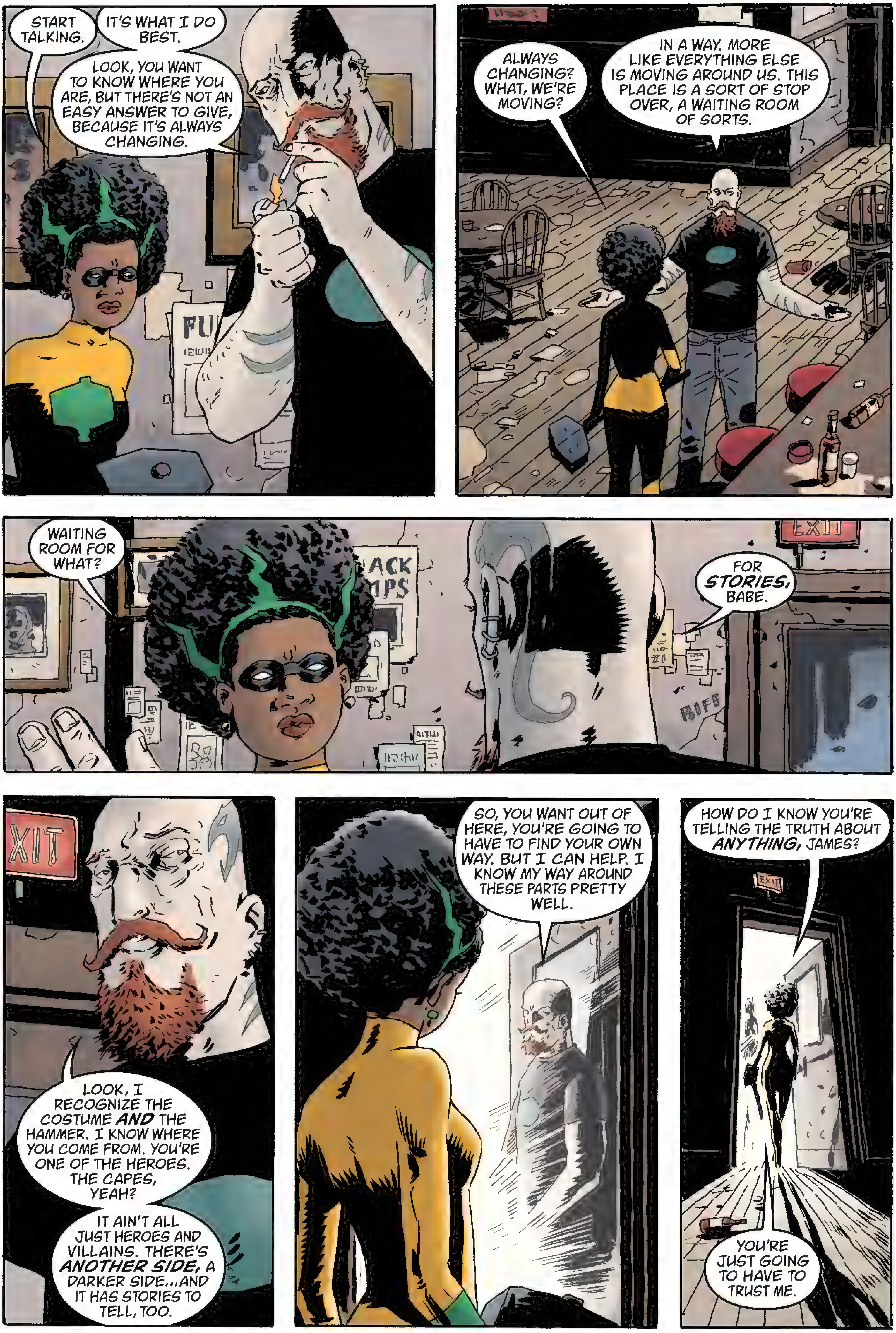

EXIT
FELL DOWN THE STAIRS, LANDED ON YOUR HEAD--
--AND GUESS WHAT, NOW YOU'RE DEAD!
WHERE **YOU** GOING, HONEY?
SHUT UP OR I'LL SMASH YOUR **HEAD** WITH MY GIANT HAMMER.
RIP
DE
EXIT
HEH. YOU GOT **SPUNK,** KID. I LIKE THAT. WE COULD USE MORE OF THAT AROUND HERE.
SORRY TO DISAPPOINT, BUT I'M GETTING **OUT** OF THIS--


--PLACE?
WHAT *IS* THIS?
DEATH. DEATH DEATH! LIFE LIFE LIFE! STUCK IN YOUR HEAD LIKE I'M STUCK ON A KNIFE, OH YEAH, BABE!

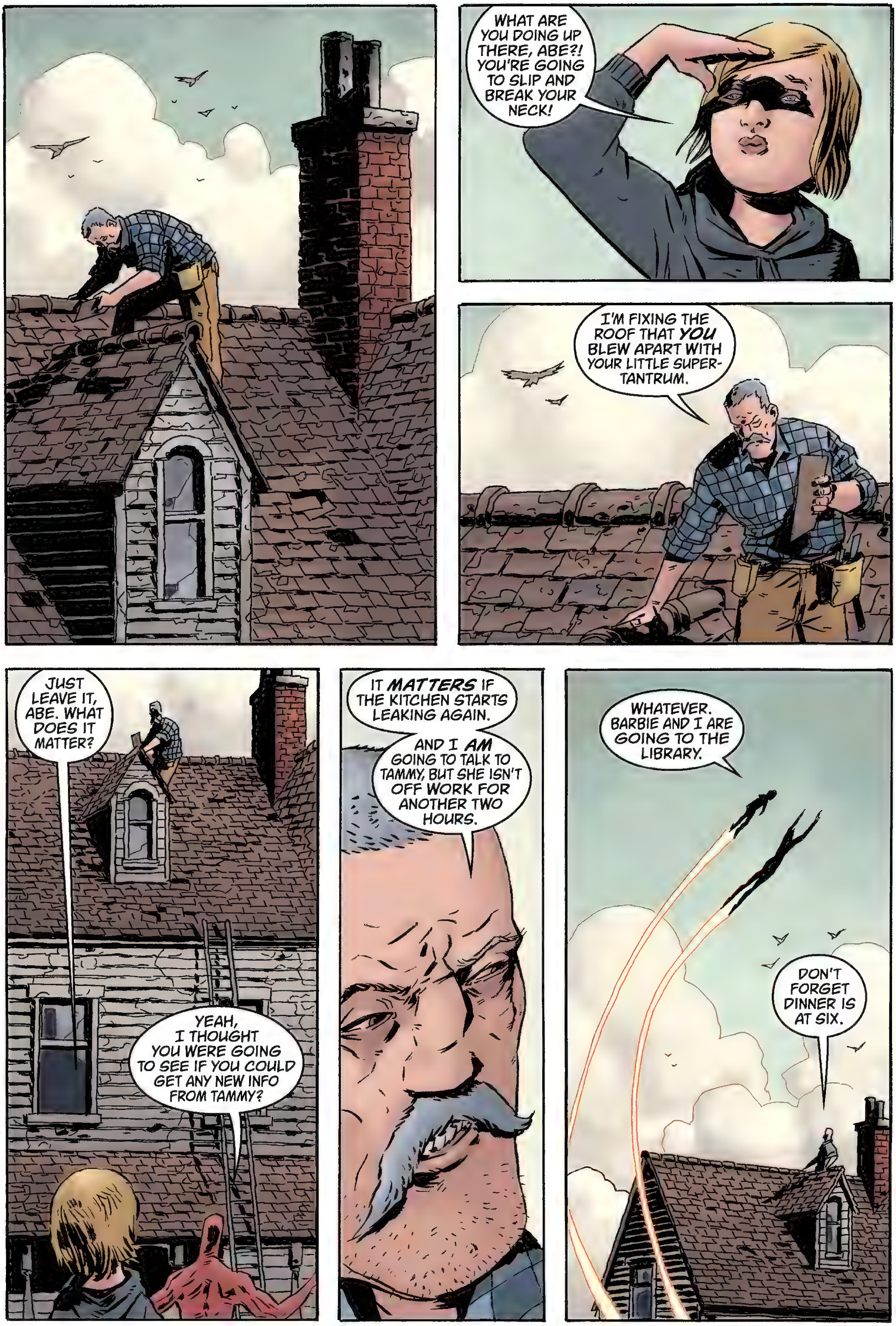

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS PLACE?
WHAT THE HELL *INDEED.*
MIGHT AS WELL PULL UP A STOOL.
GONNA BE A *LONG* NIGHT.

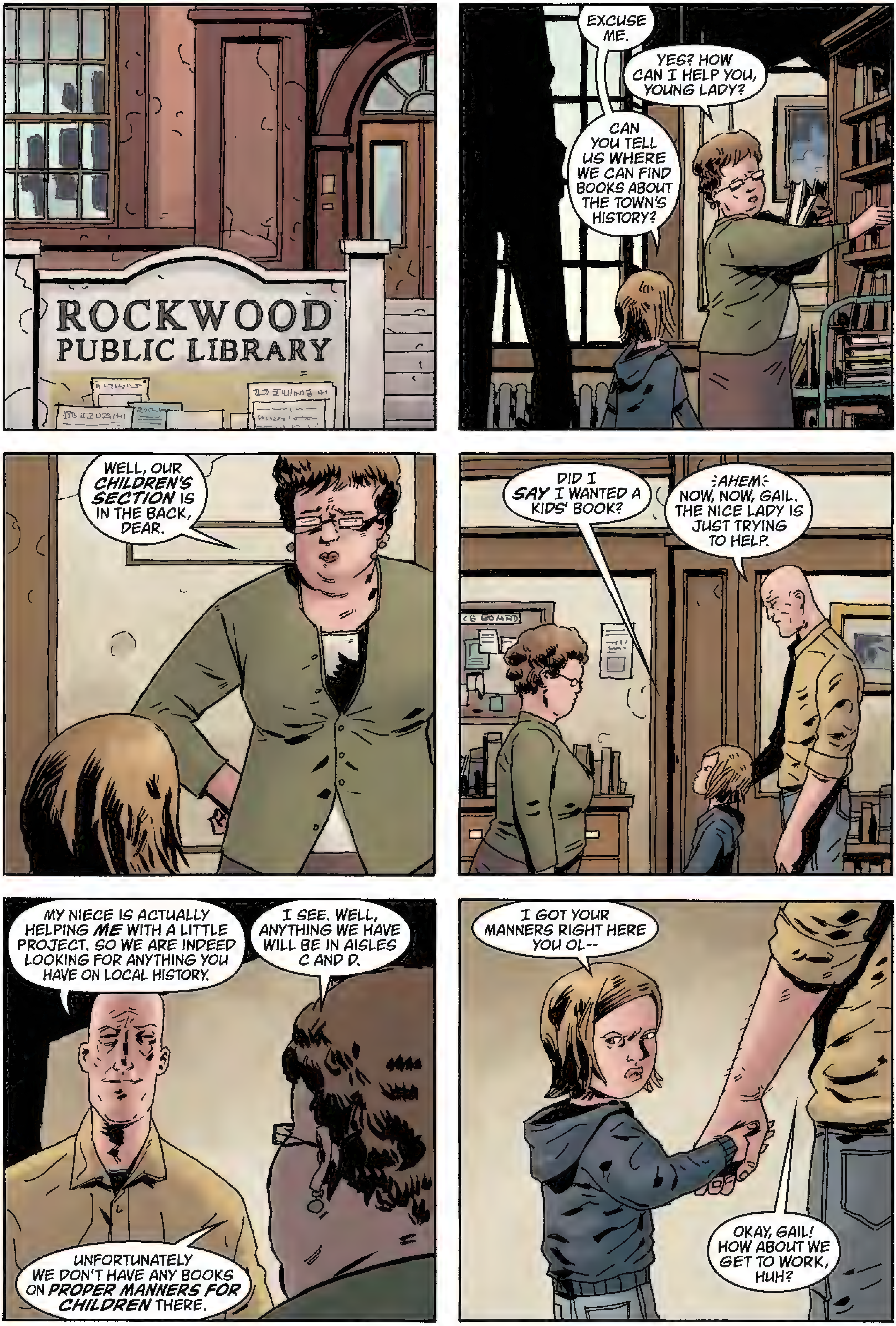
The ANTE ROOM
The ANTEROOM
The ANTEROOM
--YOU SAY DEATH FROM ABOVE, LIFE FROM BELOW, AIN'T GOT NO REASON, AIN'T GOT NO HOPE!
YOU SAY LIFE FROM ABOVE, DEATH FROM BELOW, YOU GOT IT BACKWARDS, BABE, NOW IT'S TIME TO GO!
DEATH, DEATH, DEATH, LIFE LIFE LIFE! DEATH DEATH DEATH, GIMME THE KNIFE!
ENOUGH OF THIS... WHATEVER THIS IS. I WANT ANSWERS, *NOW.*
HOW CAN YOU GET ANSWERS WHEN YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW THE RIGHT QUESTIONS?
VODK

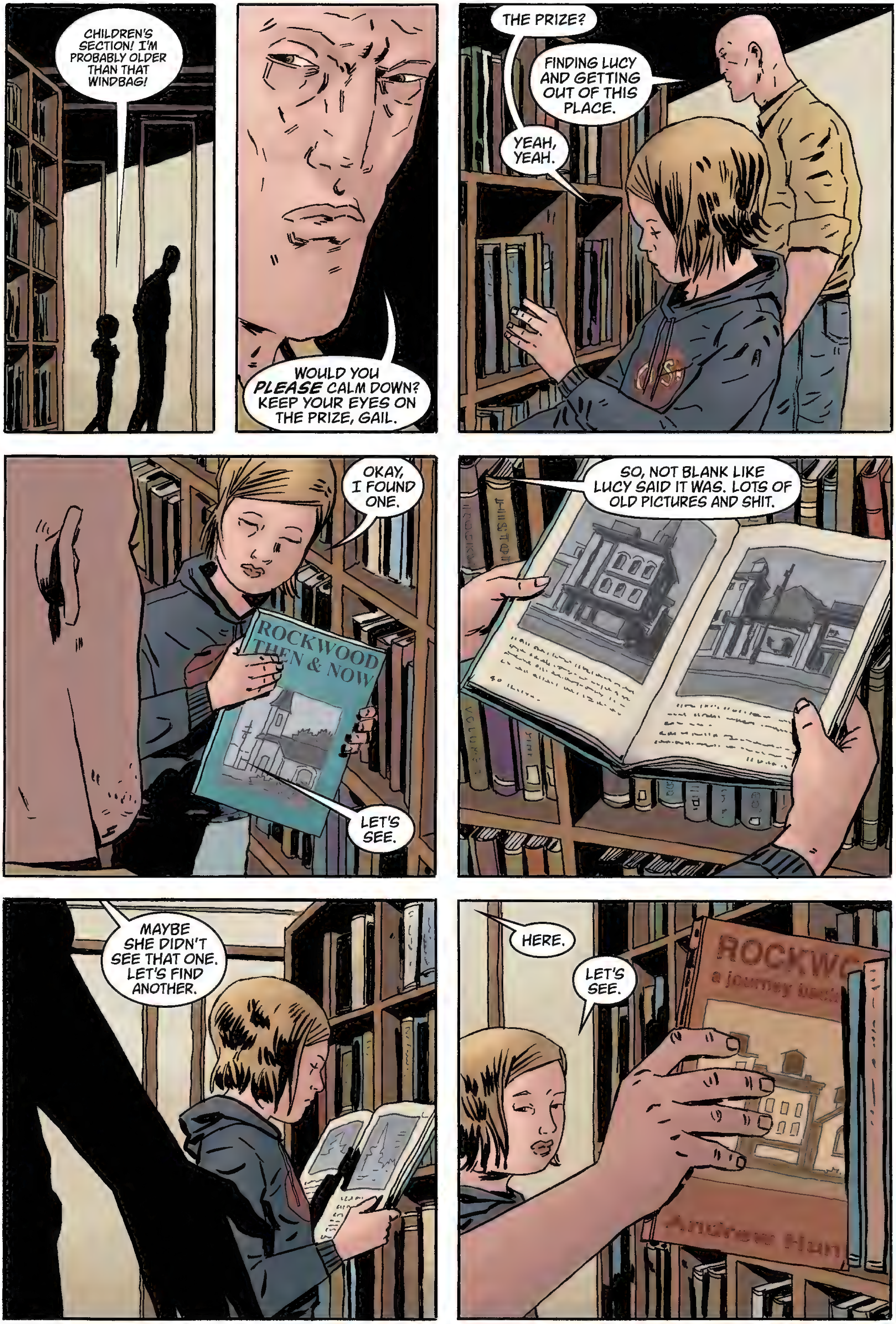

ENOUGH!!!
KRA-TOOM!!
:AHEM: ALL RIGHT THEN.
YOU HEARD HER, FOLKS. PARTY IS OVER FOR TONIGHT. BEST IF YOU ALL CLEARED OUT, YEAH.
WE WERE BOOKED FOR TWO SETS, JAMES! DON'T THINK YOU'RE GETTING OUT OF PAYING US!
YEAH, YEAH. YOU'LL GET YOUR MONEY, CIRCUIT BREAKER. JUST CLEAR OUT AND WE'LL SETTLE UP LATER.

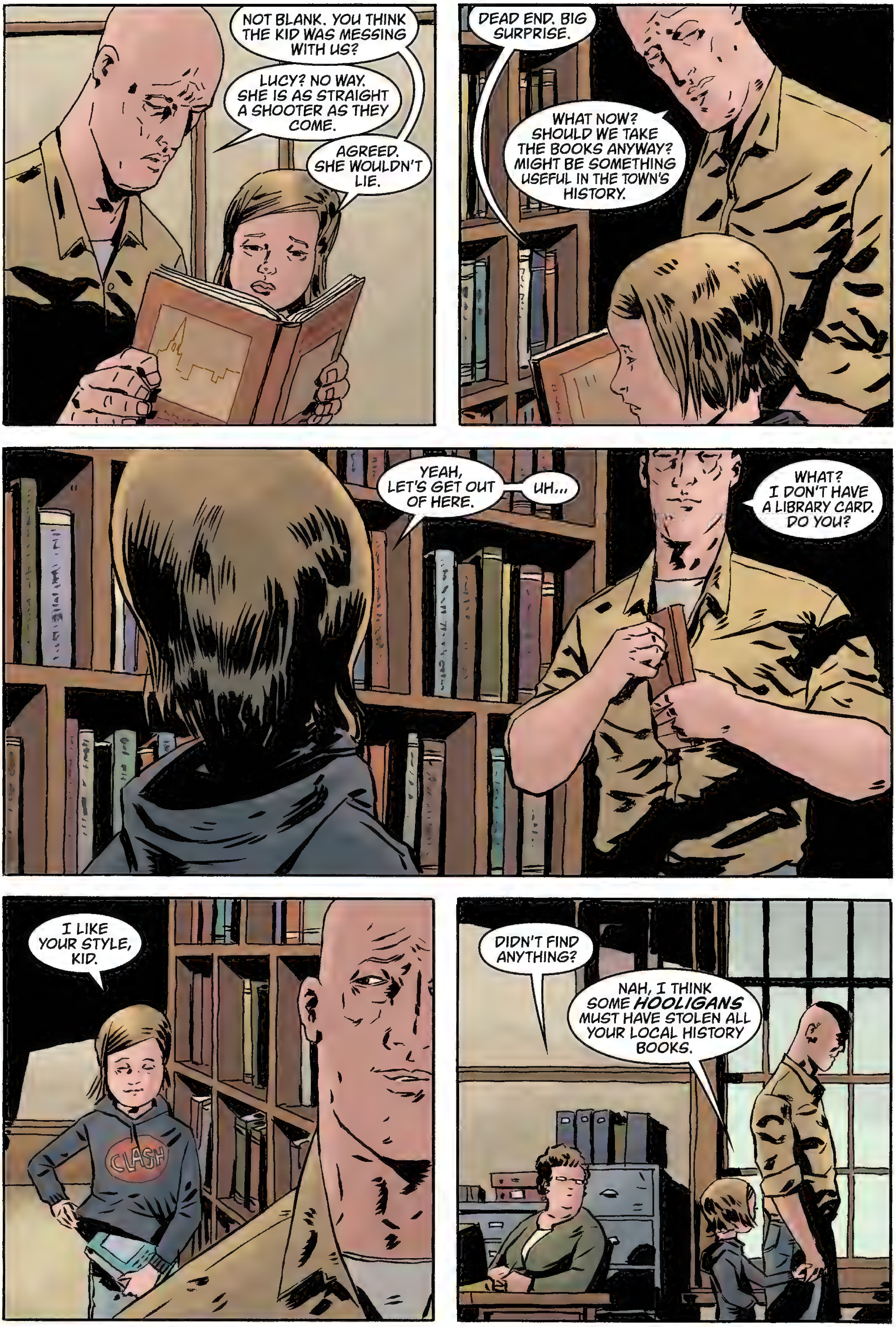

START TALKING.
IT'S WHAT I DO BEST.
LOOK, YOU WANT TO KNOW WHERE YOU ARE, BUT THERE'S NOT AN EASY ANSWER TO GIVE, BECAUSE IT'S ALWAYS CHANGING.
ALWAYS CHANGING? WHAT, WE'RE MOVING?
IN A WAY. MORE LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE IS MOVING AROUND US. THIS PLACE IS A SORT OF STOP OVER, A WAITING ROOM OF SORTS.
WAITING ROOM FOR WHAT?
FOR ***STORIES,*** BABE.
EXIT
LOOK, I RECOGNIZE THE COSTUME ***AND*** THE HAMMER. I KNOW WHERE YOU COME FROM. YOU'RE ONE OF THE HEROES. THE CAPES, YEAH?
IT AIN'T ALL JUST HEROES AND VILLAINS. THERE'S ***ANOTHER SIDE,*** A DARKER SIDE...AND IT HAS STORIES TO TELL, TOO.
SO, YOU WANT OUT OF HERE, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FIND YOUR OWN WAY. BUT I CAN HELP. I KNOW MY WAY AROUND THESE PARTS PRETTY WELL.
HOW DO I KNOW YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT ***ANYTHING,*** JAMES?
YOU'RE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO TRUST ME.

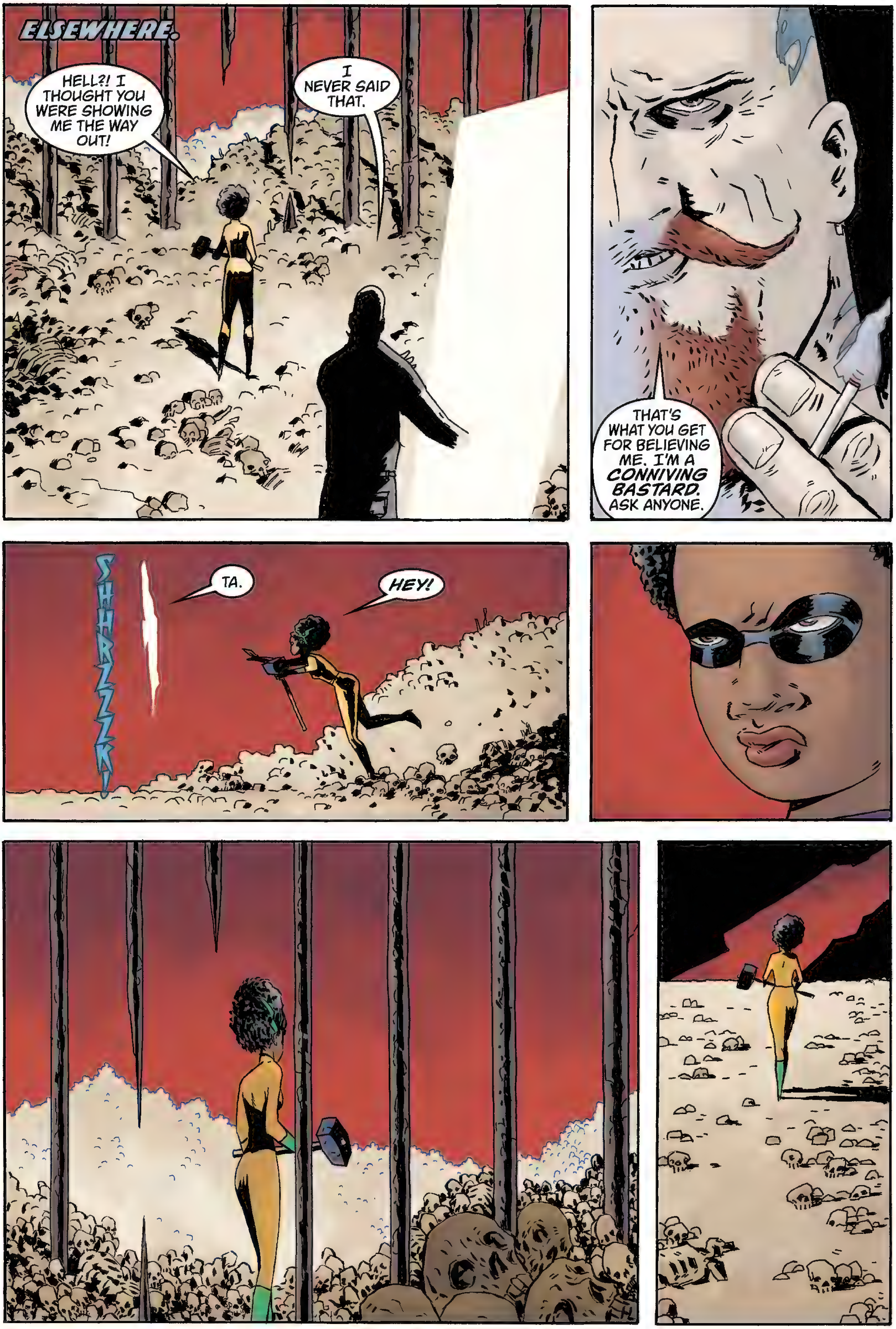
SHHRZZZK!
WHAT IS THIS?
AIN'T IT OBVIOUS?
I'VE TAKEN YOU *TO HELL.*

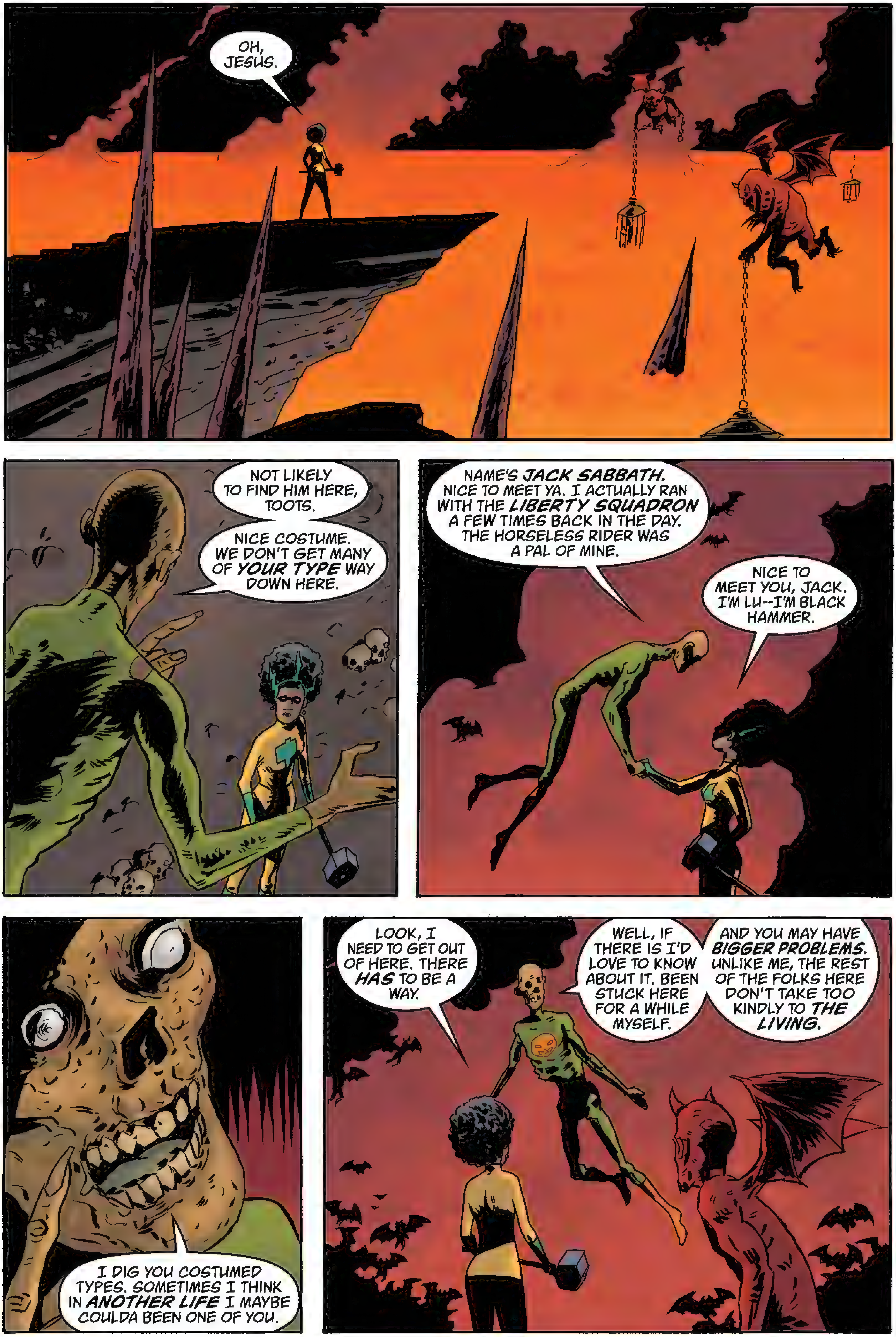

WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP THERE, ABE?! YOU'RE GOING TO SLIP AND BREAK YOUR NECK!
I'M FIXING THE ROOF THAT *YOU* BLEW APART WITH YOUR LITTLE SUPER-TANTRUM.
JUST LEAVE IT, ABE. WHAT DOES IT MATTER?
YEAH, I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO SEE IF YOU COULD GET ANY NEW INFO FROM TAMMY?
IT *MATTERS* IF THE KITCHEN STARTS LEAKING AGAIN.
AND I *AM* GOING TO TALK TO TAMMY, BUT SHE ISN'T OFF WORK FOR ANOTHER TWO HOURS.
WHATEVER. BARBIE AND I ARE GOING TO THE LIBRARY.
DON'T FORGET DINNER IS AT SIX.


ROCKWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY
EXCUSE ME.
YES? HOW CAN I HELP YOU, YOUNG LADY?
CAN YOU TELL US WHERE WE CAN FIND BOOKS ABOUT THE TOWN'S HISTORY?
WELL, OUR *CHILDREN'S SECTION* IS IN THE BACK, DEAR.
DID I *SAY* I WANTED A KIDS' BOOK?
:AHEM: NOW, NOW, GAIL. THE NICE LADY IS JUST TRYING TO HELP.
MY NIECE IS ACTUALLY HELPING *ME* WITH A LITTLE PROJECT. SO WE ARE INDEED LOOKING FOR ANYTHING YOU HAVE ON LOCAL HISTORY.
I SEE. WELL, ANYTHING WE HAVE WILL BE IN AISLES C AND D.
UNFORTUNATELY WE DON'T HAVE ANY BOOKS ON *PROPER MANNERS FOR CHILDREN* THERE.
I GOT YOUR MANNERS RIGHT HERE YOU OL--
OKAY, GAIL! HOW ABOUT WE GET TO WORK, HUH?

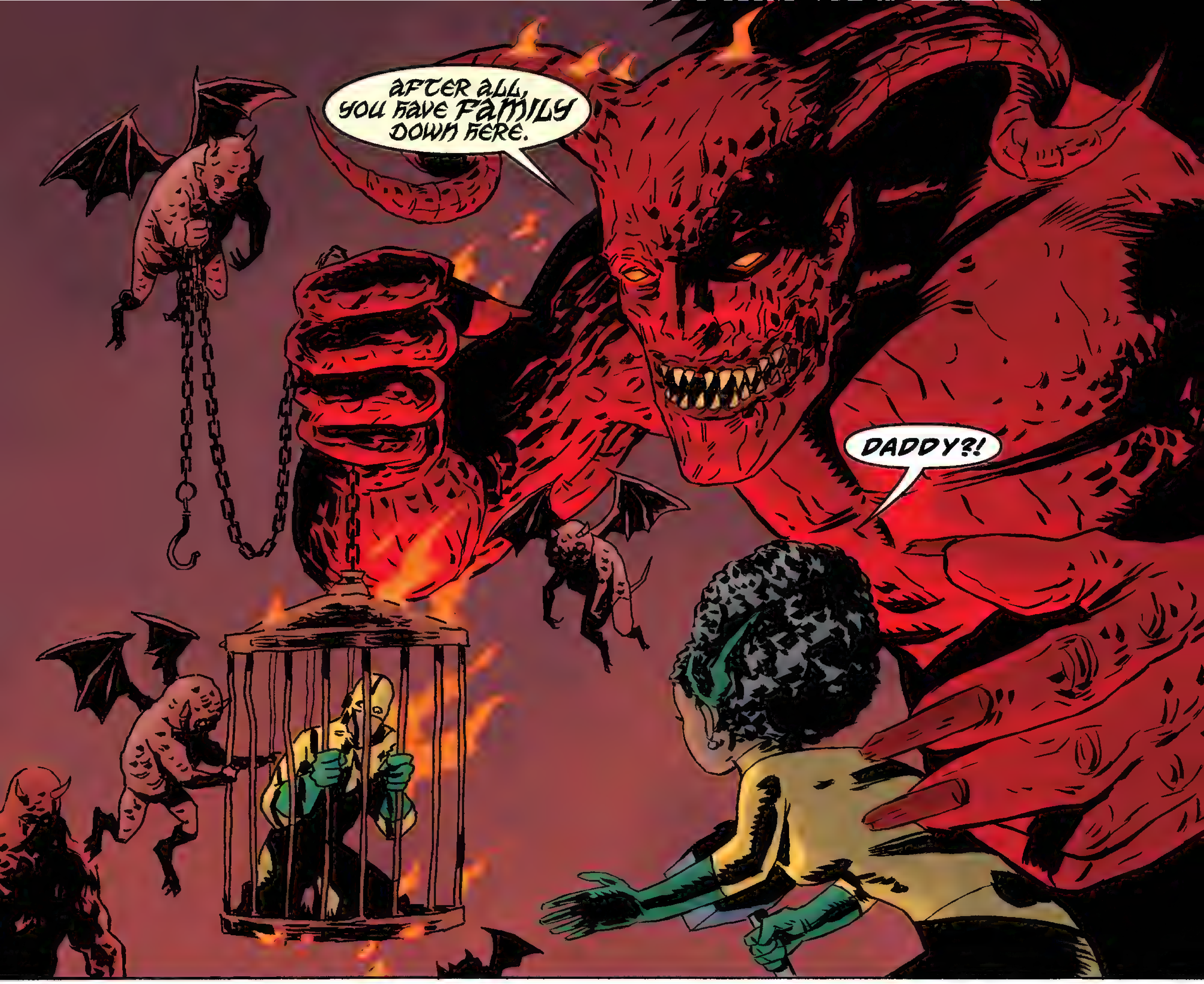

CHILDREN'S SECTION! I'M PROBABLY OLDER THAN THAT WINDBAG!
WOULD YOU *PLEASE* CALM DOWN? KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE, GAIL.
THE PRIZE?
FINDING LUCY AND GETTING OUT OF THIS PLACE.
YEAH, YEAH.
OKAY, I FOUND ONE.
ROCKWOOD THEN & NOW
LET'S SEE.
SO, NOT BLANK LIKE LUCY SAID IT WAS. LOTS OF OLD PICTURES AND SHIT.
MAYBE SHE DIDN'T SEE THAT ONE. LET'S FIND ANOTHER.
HERE.
LET'S SEE.
ROCKWO
Andrew Hun

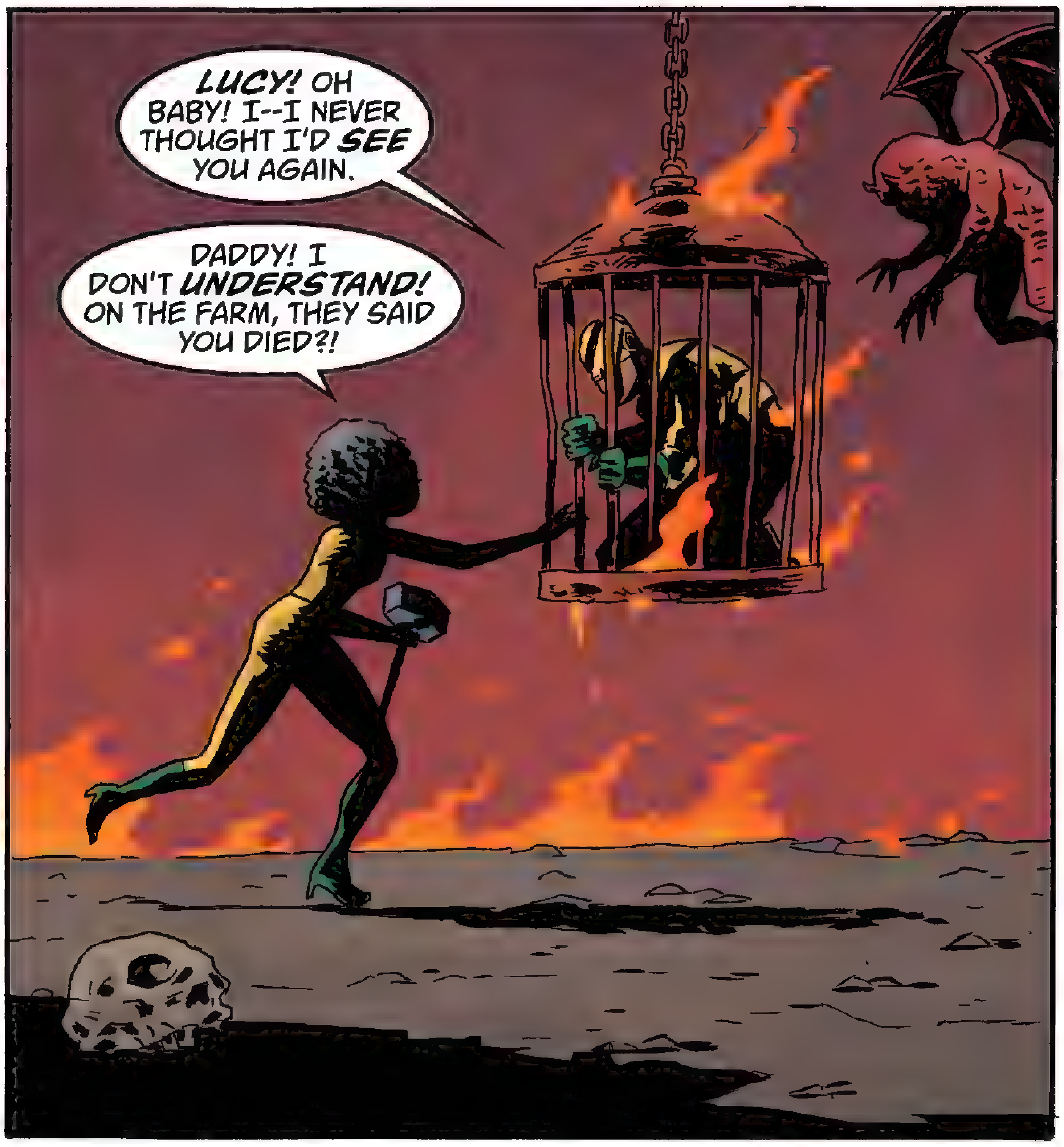

NOT BLANK. YOU THINK THE KID WAS MESSING WITH US?
LUCY? NO WAY. SHE IS AS STRAIGHT A SHOOTER AS THEY COME.
AGREED. SHE WOULDN'T LIE.
DEAD END. BIG SURPRISE.
WHAT NOW? SHOULD WE TAKE THE BOOKS ANYWAY? MIGHT BE SOMETHING USEFUL IN THE TOWN'S HISTORY.
YEAH, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.
UH...
WHAT? I DON'T HAVE A LIBRARY CARD. DO YOU?
I LIKE YOUR STYLE, KID.
CLASH
DIDN'T FIND ANYTHING?
NAH, I THINK SOME HOOLIGANS MUST HAVE STOLEN ALL YOUR LOCAL HISTORY BOOKS.


ELSEWHERE.
HELL?! I THOUGHT YOU WERE SHOWING ME THE WAY OUT!
I NEVER SAID THAT.
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR BELIEVING ME. I'M A CONNIVING BASTARD. ASK ANYONE.
SHHRZZZK!
TA.
HEY!

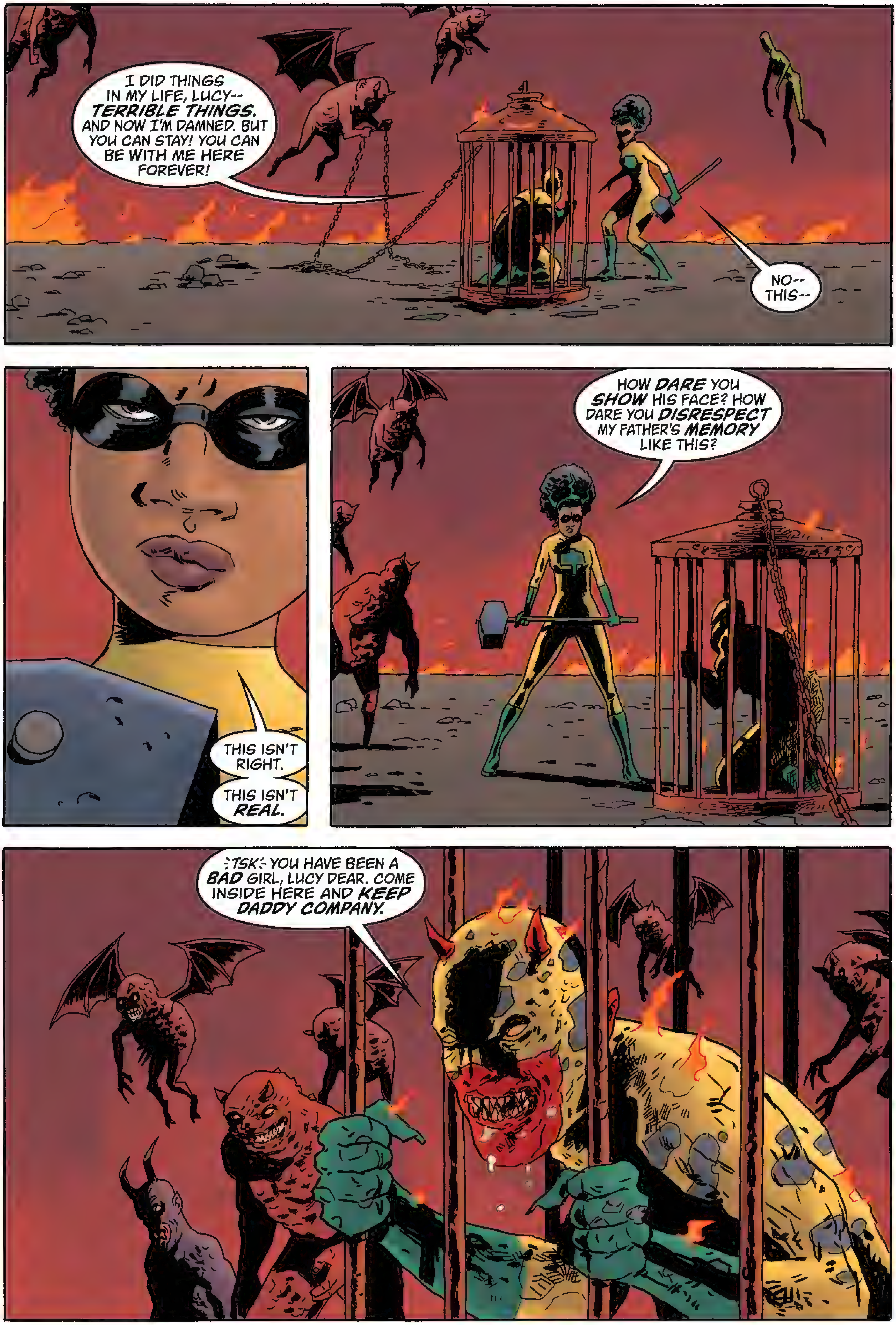

OH, JESUS.
NOT LIKELY TO FIND HIM HERE, TOOTS.
NICE COSTUME. WE DON'T GET MANY OF **YOUR TYPE** WAY DOWN HERE.
NAME'S **JACK SABBATH.** NICE TO MEET YA. I ACTUALLY RAN WITH THE **LIBERTY SQUADRON** A FEW TIMES BACK IN THE DAY. THE HORSELESS RIDER WAS A PAL OF MINE.
NICE TO MEET YOU, JACK. I'M LU--I'M BLACK HAMMER.
I DIG YOU COSTUMED TYPES. SOMETIMES I THINK IN **ANOTHER LIFE** I MAYBE COULDA BEEN ONE OF YOU.
LOOK, I NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE. THERE **HAS** TO BE A WAY.
WELL, IF THERE IS I'D LOVE TO KNOW ABOUT IT. BEEN STUCK HERE FOR A WHILE MYSELF.
AND YOU MAY HAVE **BIGGER PROBLEMS.** UNLIKE ME, THE REST OF THE FOLKS HERE DON'T TAKE TOO KINDLY TO **THE LIVING.**

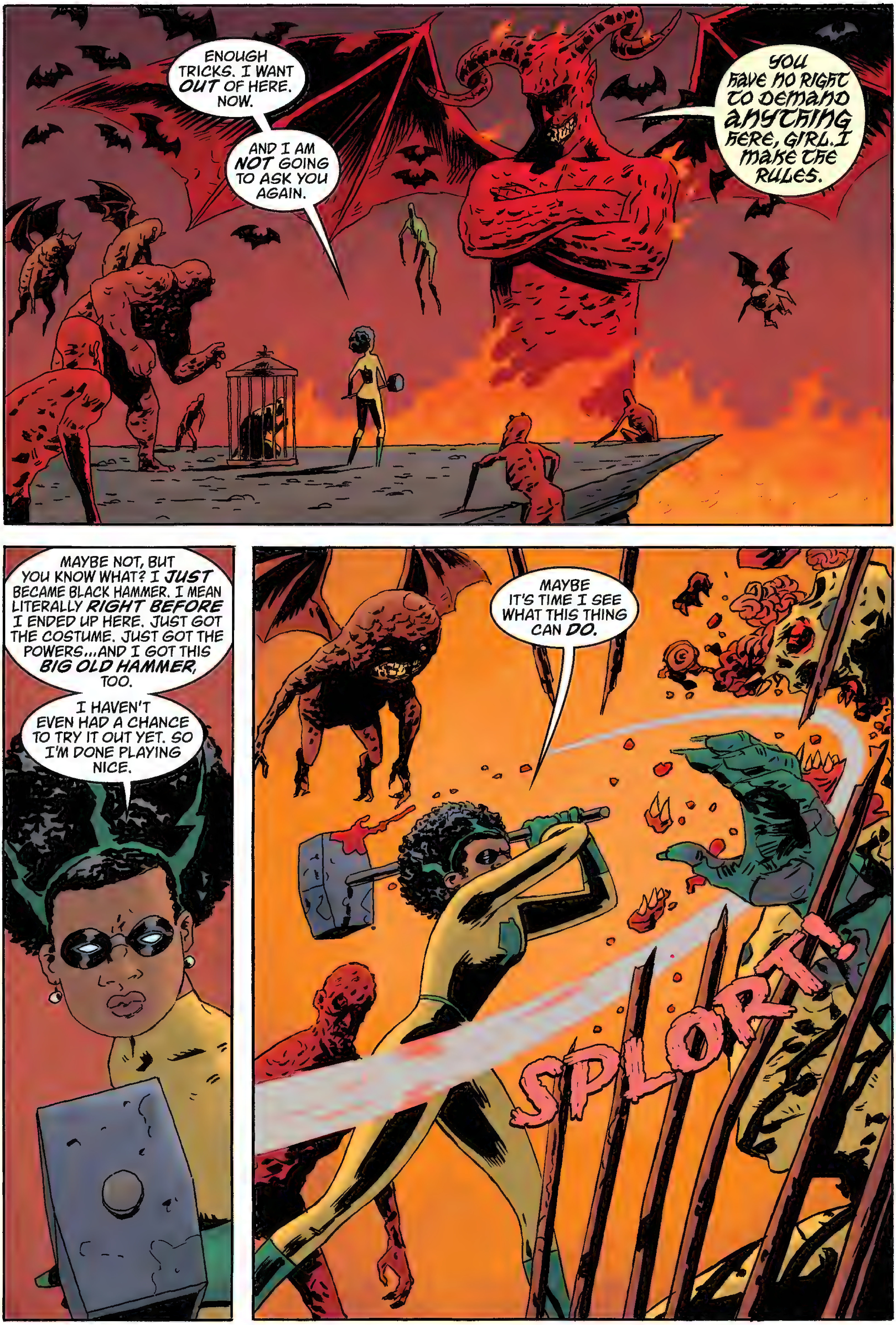
IT IS NOT THE LIVING WE REJECT HERE, JACK SABBATH. IT IS THOSE WHO ENTER WITHOUT PAYING A PRICE.
UH OH.
UH, HEY BOSS. HOW'S IT HANGING?
QUIET, JACK SABBATH.
TELL ME, WOMAN, WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS IN MY DOMAIN?
I HAVE NO BUSINESS. I JUST WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE AND BACK TO THE *ANTEROOM*. THAT BASTARD LONNIE JAMES DITCHED ME HERE.
JAMES? THAT TWO-BIT MAGUS OWES ME HIS SOUL TWICE OVER. IT SEEMS HE HAS DELIVERED *YOU* TO ME AS COMPENSATION, LUCY WEBER.
YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
OF COURSE I DO.

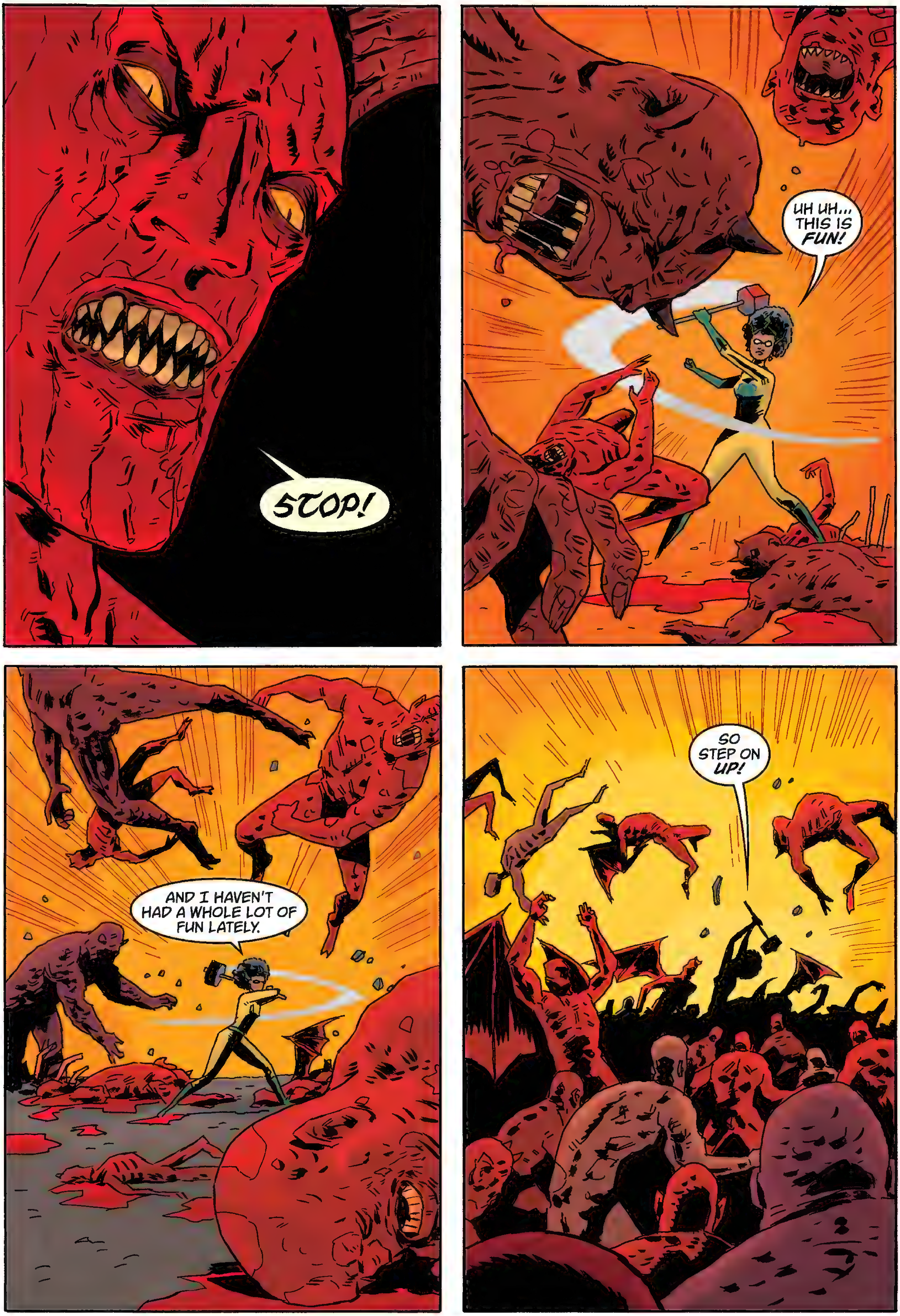

AFTER ALL, YOU HAVE FAMILY DOWN HERE.
DADDY?!

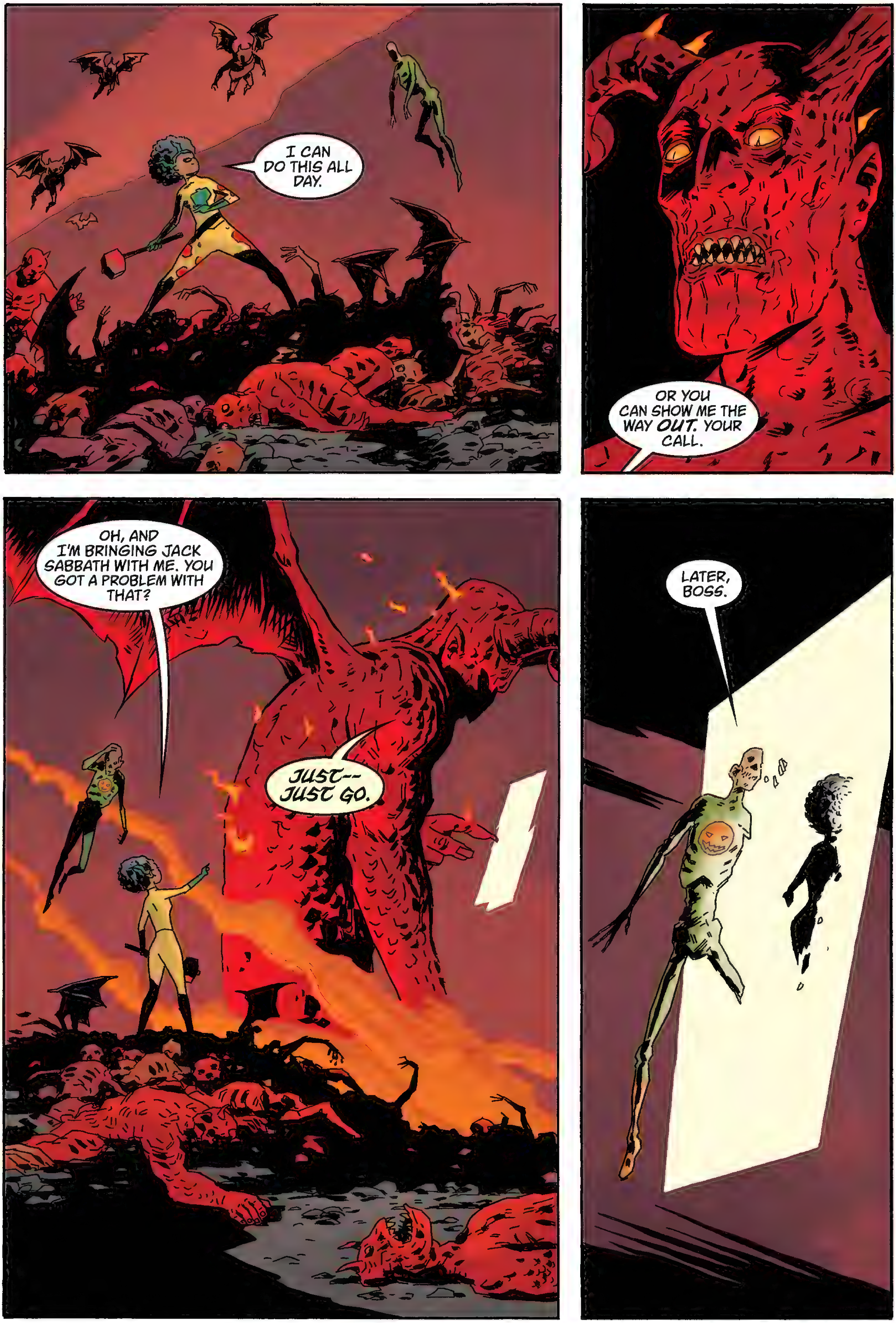

LUCY! OH BABY! I--I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE YOU AGAIN.
DADDY! I DON'T UNDERSTAND! ON THE FARM, THEY SAID YOU DIED?!

I AM DEAD, LUCY. THIS--THIS IS WHERE I ENDED UP.
NO!

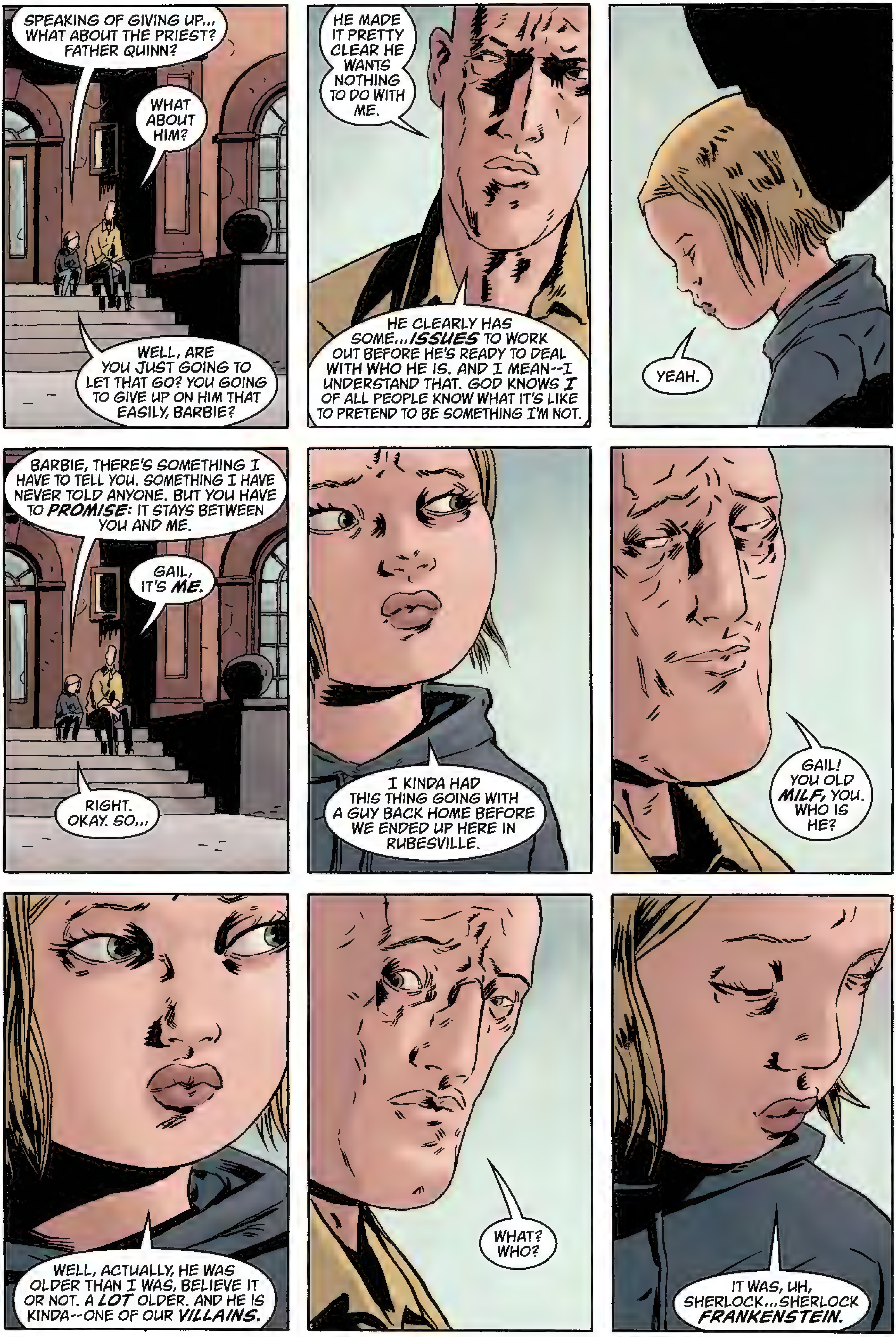

I DID THINGS IN MY LIFE, LUCY-- **TERRIBLE THINGS.** AND NOW I'M DAMNED. BUT YOU CAN STAY! YOU CAN BE WITH ME HERE FOREVER!
NO-- THIS--
THIS ISN'T RIGHT.
THIS ISN'T ***REAL.***
HOW ***DARE*** YOU ***SHOW*** HIS FACE? HOW DARE YOU ***DISRESPECT*** MY FATHER'S ***MEMORY*** LIKE THIS?
⁝TSK⁝ YOU HAVE BEEN A ***BAD*** GIRL, LUCY DEAR. COME INSIDE HERE AND ***KEEP DADDY COMPANY.***

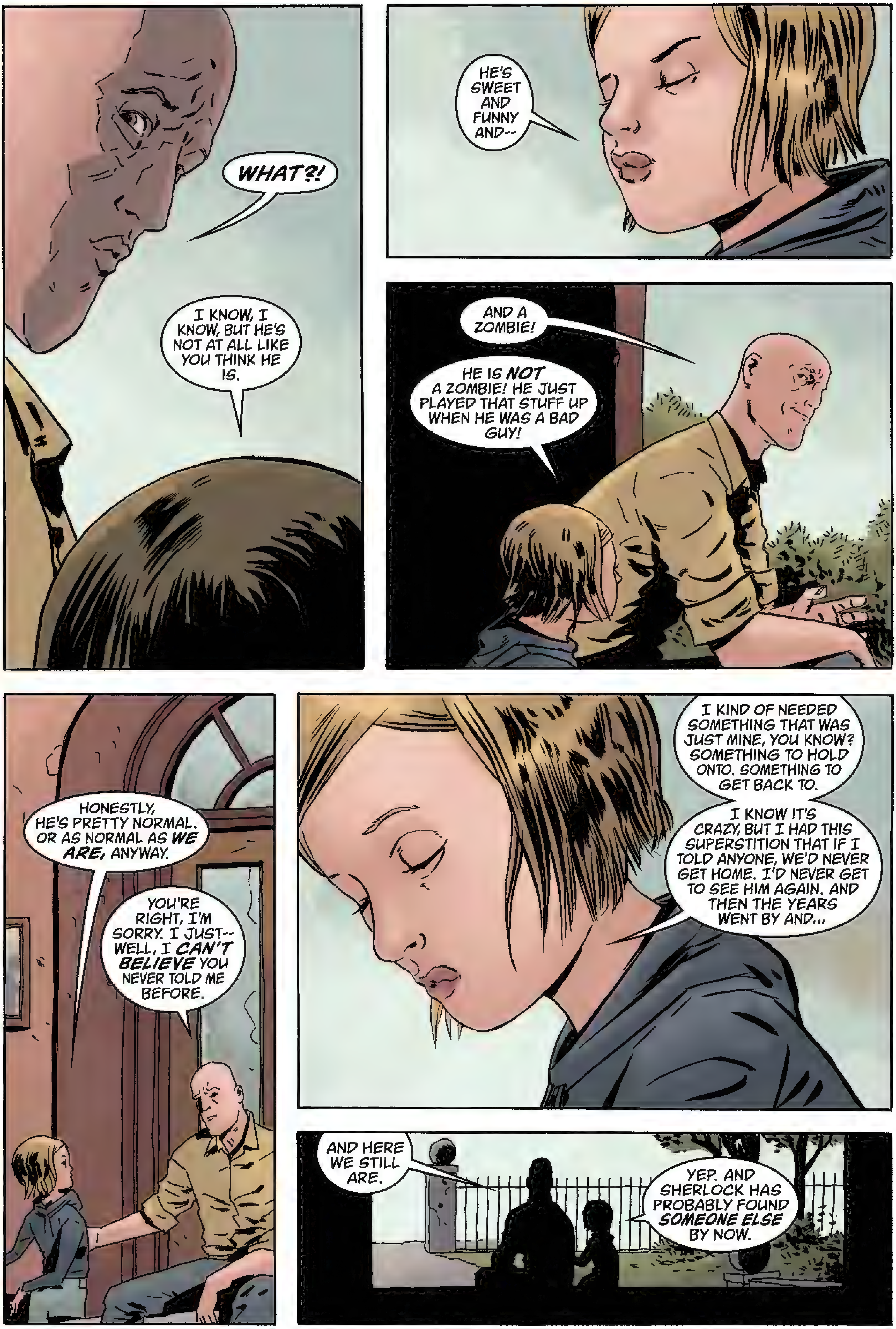

ENOUGH TRICKS. I WANT OUT OF HERE. NOW.
AND I AM NOT GOING TO ASK YOU AGAIN.
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO DEMAND ANYTHING HERE, GIRL. I MAKE THE RULES.
MAYBE NOT, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? I JUST BECAME BLACK HAMMER. I MEAN LITERALLY RIGHT BEFORE I ENDED UP HERE. JUST GOT THE COSTUME. JUST GOT THE POWERS...AND I GOT THIS BIG OLD HAMMER, TOO.
I HAVEN'T EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO TRY IT OUT YET. SO I'M DONE PLAYING NICE.
MAYBE IT'S TIME I SEE WHAT THIS THING CAN DO.
SPLORT!

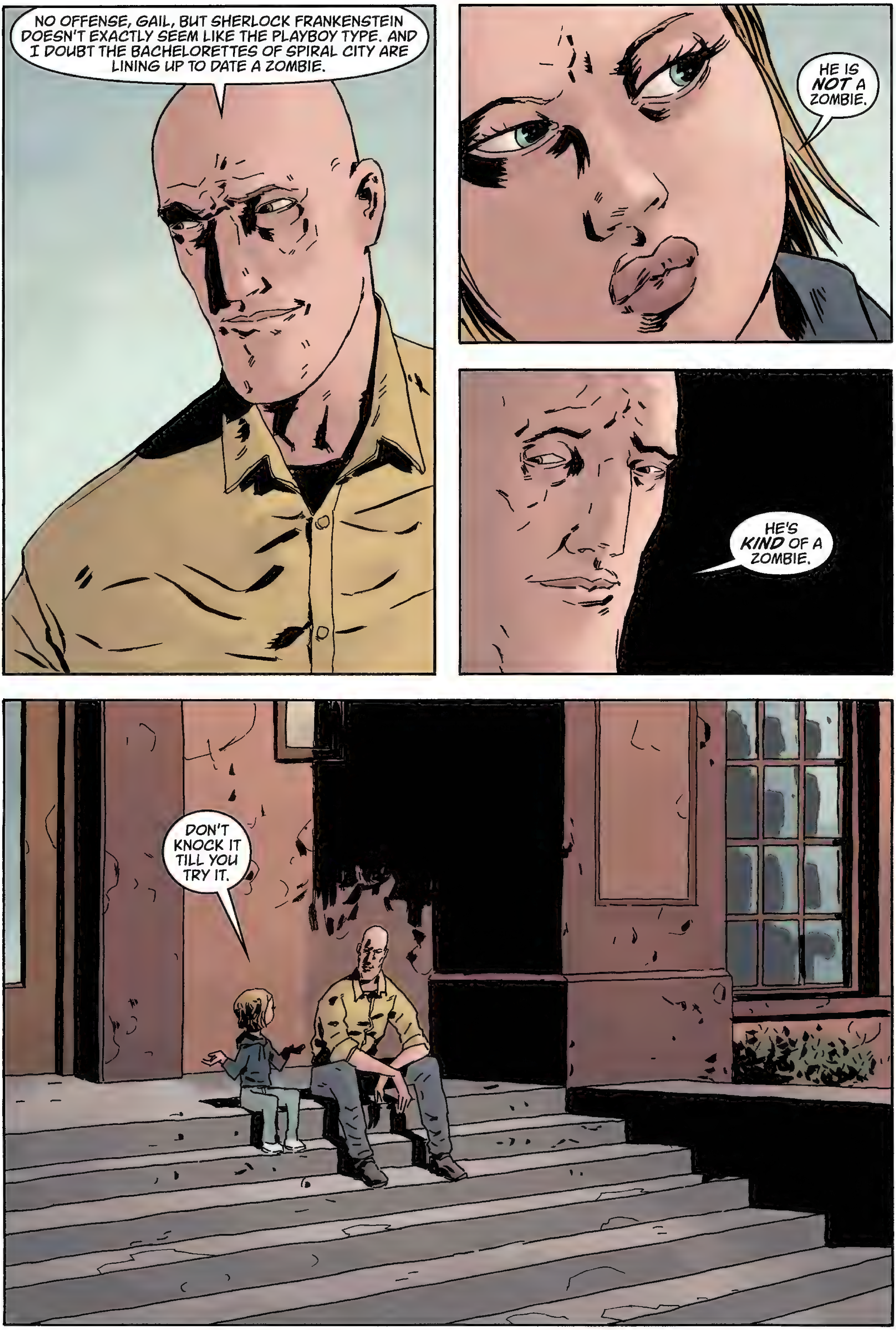

STOP!
UH UH... THIS IS FUN!
AND I HAVEN'T HAD A WHOLE LOT OF FUN LATELY.
SO STEP ON UP!

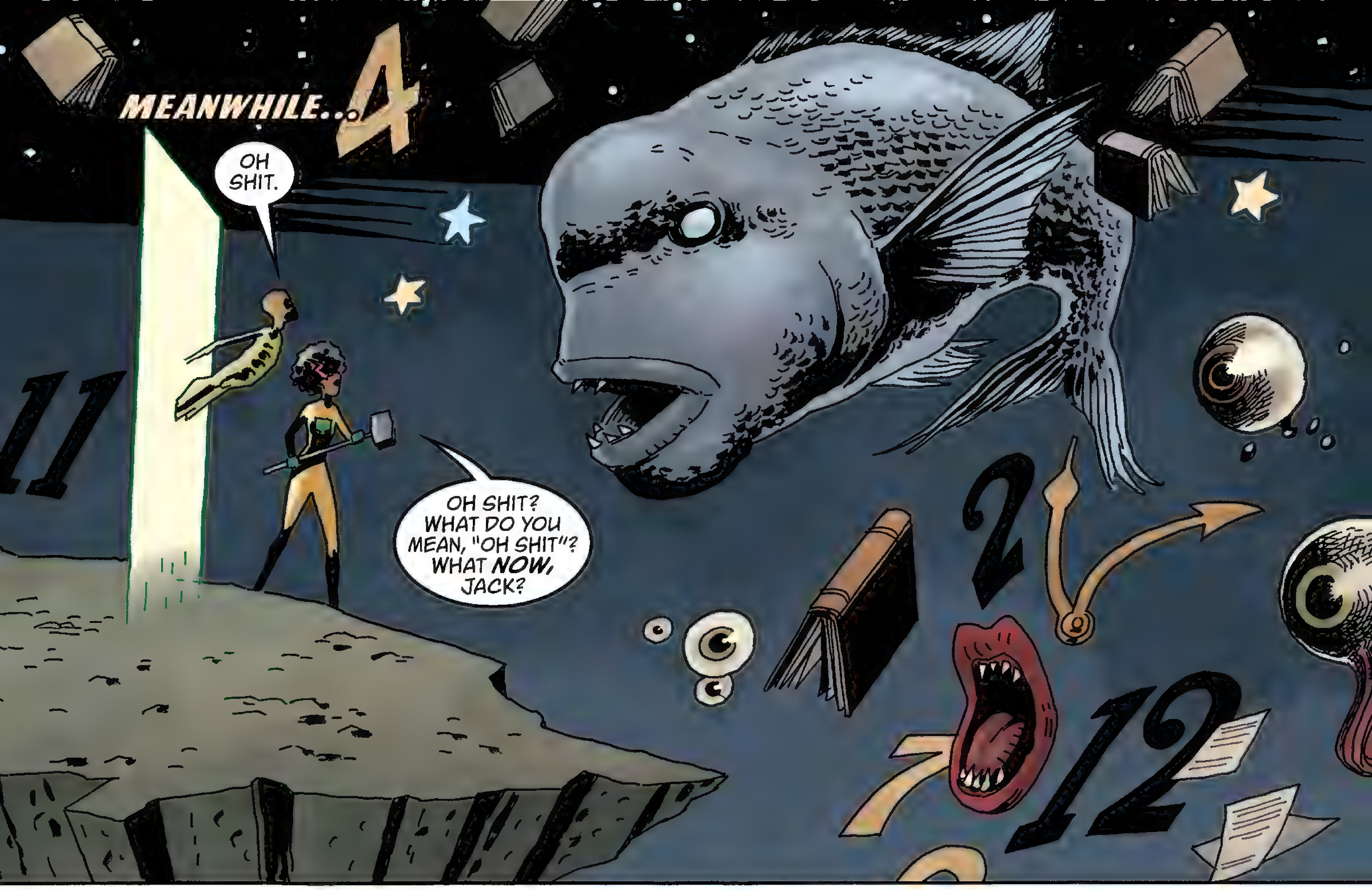

I CAN DO THIS ALL DAY.
OR YOU CAN SHOW ME THE WAY *OUT*. YOUR CALL.
OH, AND I'M BRINGING JACK SABBATH WITH ME. YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT?
JUST-- JUST GO.
LATER, BOSS.

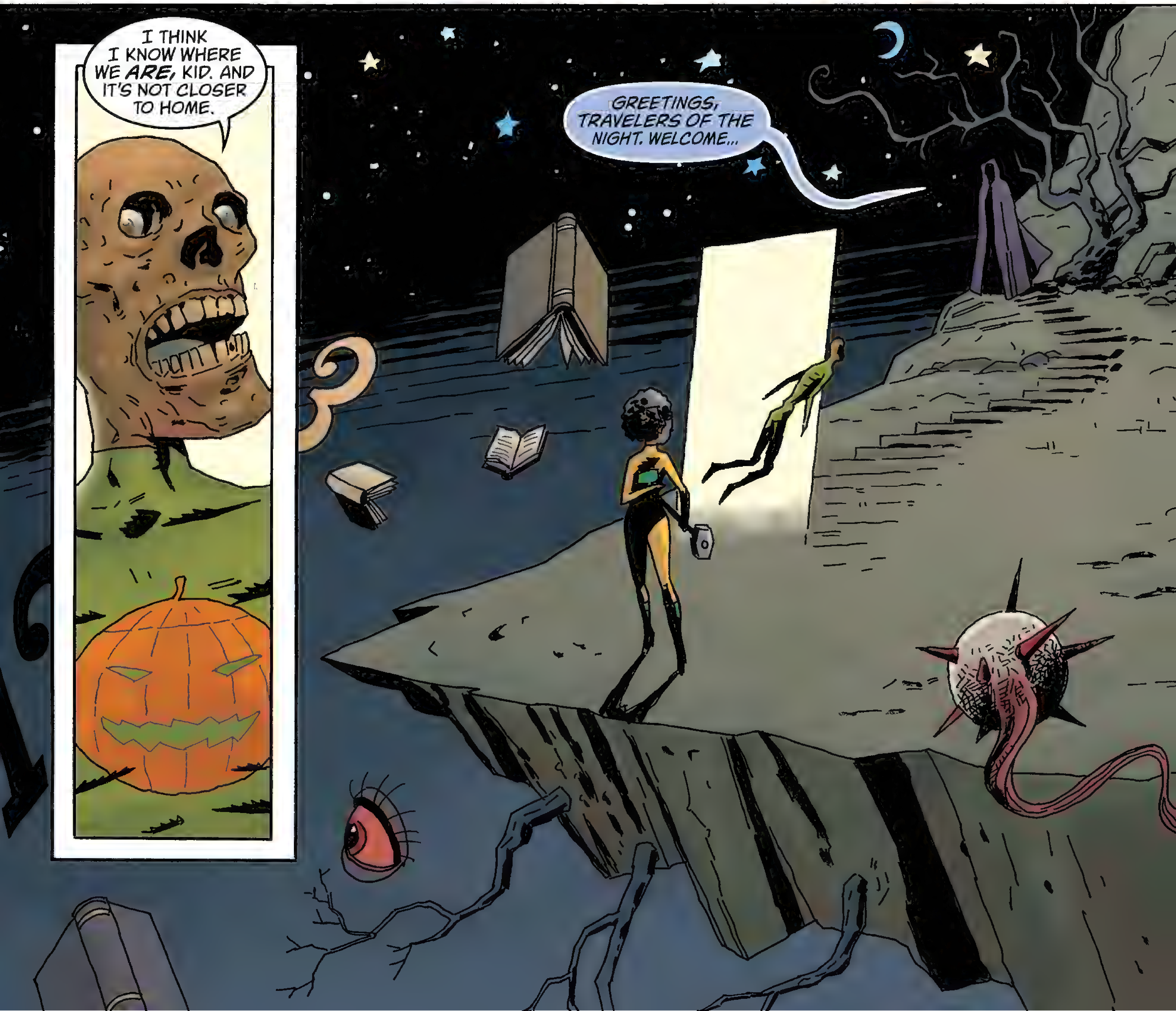
ROCKWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY
ROCKWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY
SO...
SO.
I FEEL-- I FEEL *OLD*, BARBIE.
NEED I POINT OUT THE IRONY OF *YOU* SAYING THAT?
I KNOW, I KNOW. DON'T GET ME WRONG, THERE'S NOTHING I WANT MORE THAN TO FINALLY BE MY OWN AGE AGAIN.
BUT THIS IS DIFFERENT. I MEAN I FEEL OLD IN A DIFFERENT WAY, LIKE TIRED. *WORN OUT.*
I MEAN, I HAD THIS FLASH OF EXCITEMENT AGAIN WHEN LUCY SHOWED UP. I THOUGHT WE WERE FINALLY GOING TO BE FREE. AND THEN--*POOF.* THERE SHE GOES AGAIN.
AND HERE WE ARE. RIGHT BACK WHERE WE STARTED.
EXACTLY.
WE STILL HAVE SOME *LEADS* TO FOLLOW, GAIL. DON'T GIVE UP ON ME YET.
MAYBE DRAGONFLY WILL FIND SOMETHING OUT WHEN SHE LOOKS FOR SHERIFF TRUEHEART. OR ABE.


SPEAKING OF GIVING UP... WHAT ABOUT THE PRIEST? FATHER QUINN?
WHAT ABOUT HIM?
WELL, ARE YOU JUST GOING TO LET THAT GO? YOU GOING TO GIVE UP ON HIM THAT EASILY, BARBIE?
HE MADE IT PRETTY CLEAR HE WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.
HE CLEARLY HAS SOME... ***ISSUES*** TO WORK OUT BEFORE HE'S READY TO DEAL WITH WHO HE IS. AND I MEAN--I UNDERSTAND THAT. GOD KNOWS ***I*** OF ALL PEOPLE KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO PRETEND TO BE SOMETHING I'M NOT.
YEAH.
BARBIE, THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO TELL YOU. SOMETHING I HAVE NEVER TOLD ANYONE. BUT YOU HAVE TO ***PROMISE:*** IT STAYS BETWEEN YOU AND ME.
GAIL, IT'S ***ME.***
RIGHT. OKAY. SO...
I KINDA HAD THIS THING GOING WITH A GUY BACK HOME BEFORE WE ENDED UP HERE IN RUBESVILLE.
GAIL! YOU OLD ***MILF,*** YOU. WHO IS HE?
WELL, ACTUALLY, HE WAS OLDER THAN I WAS, BELIEVE IT OR NOT. A ***LOT*** OLDER. AND HE IS KINDA--ONE OF OUR ***VILLAINS.***
WHAT? WHO?
IT WAS, UH, SHERLOCK...SHERLOCK ***FRANKENSTEIN.***


WHAT?!
I KNOW, I KNOW, BUT HE'S NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU THINK HE IS.
HE'S SWEET AND FUNNY AND--
AND A ZOMBIE!
HE IS NOT A ZOMBIE! HE JUST PLAYED THAT STUFF UP WHEN HE WAS A BAD GUY!
HONESTLY, HE'S PRETTY NORMAL. OR AS NORMAL AS WE ARE, ANYWAY.
YOU'RE RIGHT, I'M SORRY. I JUST-- WELL, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU NEVER TOLD ME BEFORE.
I KIND OF NEEDED SOMETHING THAT WAS JUST MINE, YOU KNOW? SOMETHING TO HOLD ONTO. SOMETHING TO GET BACK TO.
I KNOW IT'S CRAZY, BUT I HAD THIS SUPERSTITION THAT IF I TOLD ANYONE, WE'D NEVER GET HOME. I'D NEVER GET TO SEE HIM AGAIN. AND THEN THE YEARS WENT BY AND...
AND HERE WE STILL ARE.
YEP. AND SHERLOCK HAS PROBABLY FOUND SOMEONE ELSE BY NOW.


NO OFFENSE, GAIL, BUT SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN DOESN'T EXACTLY SEEM LIKE THE PLAYBOY TYPE. AND I DOUBT THE BACHELORETTES OF SPIRAL CITY ARE LINING UP TO DATE A ZOMBIE.
HE IS **NOT** A ZOMBIE.
HE'S **KIND** OF A ZOMBIE.
DON'T KNOCK IT TILL YOU TRY IT.


MEANWHILE...
OH SHIT.
OH SHIT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "OH SHIT"? WHAT NOW, JACK?

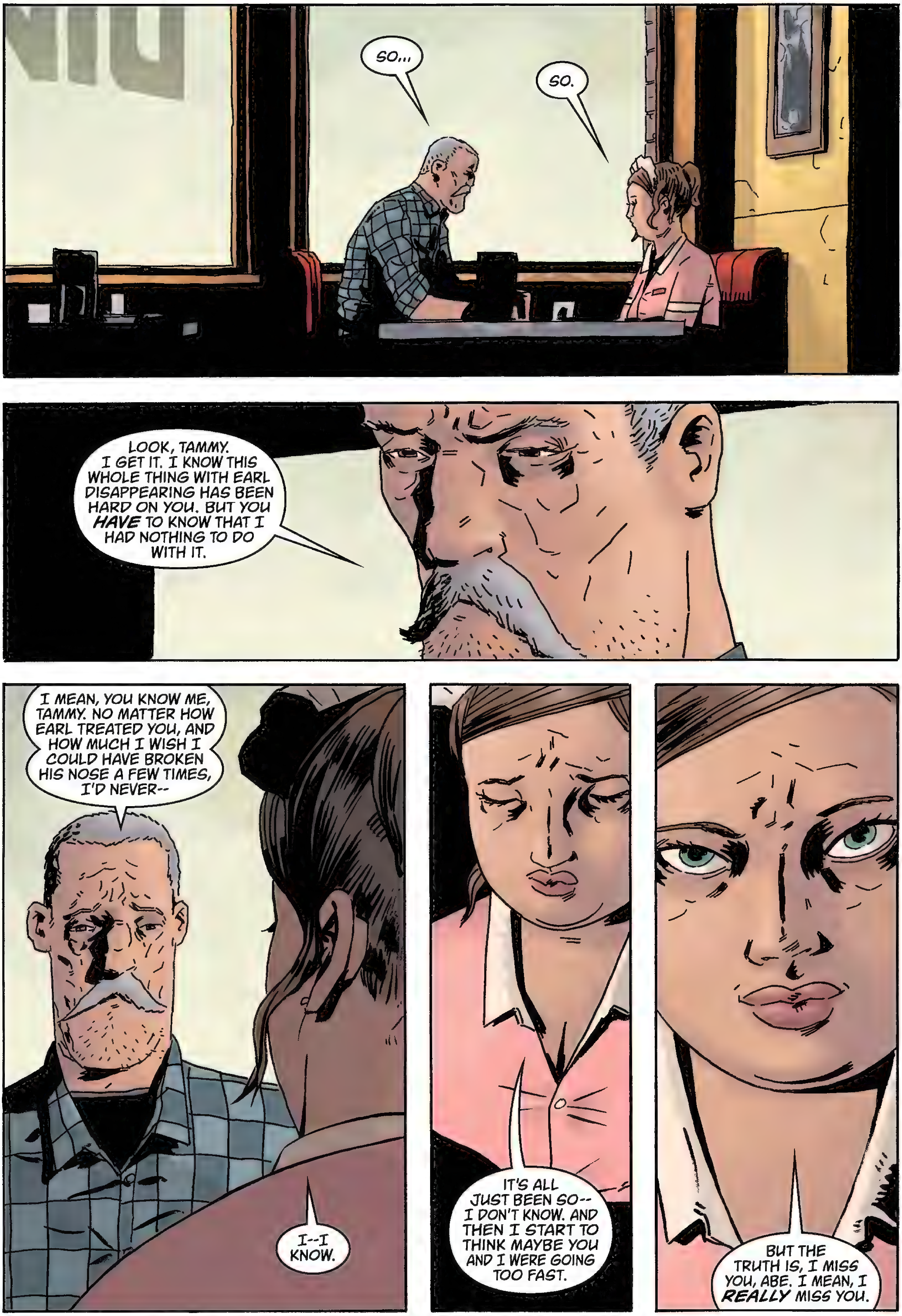

I THINK I KNOW WHERE WE ARE, KID. AND IT'S NOT CLOSER TO HOME.
GREETINGS, TRAVELERS OF THE NIGHT. WELCOME...

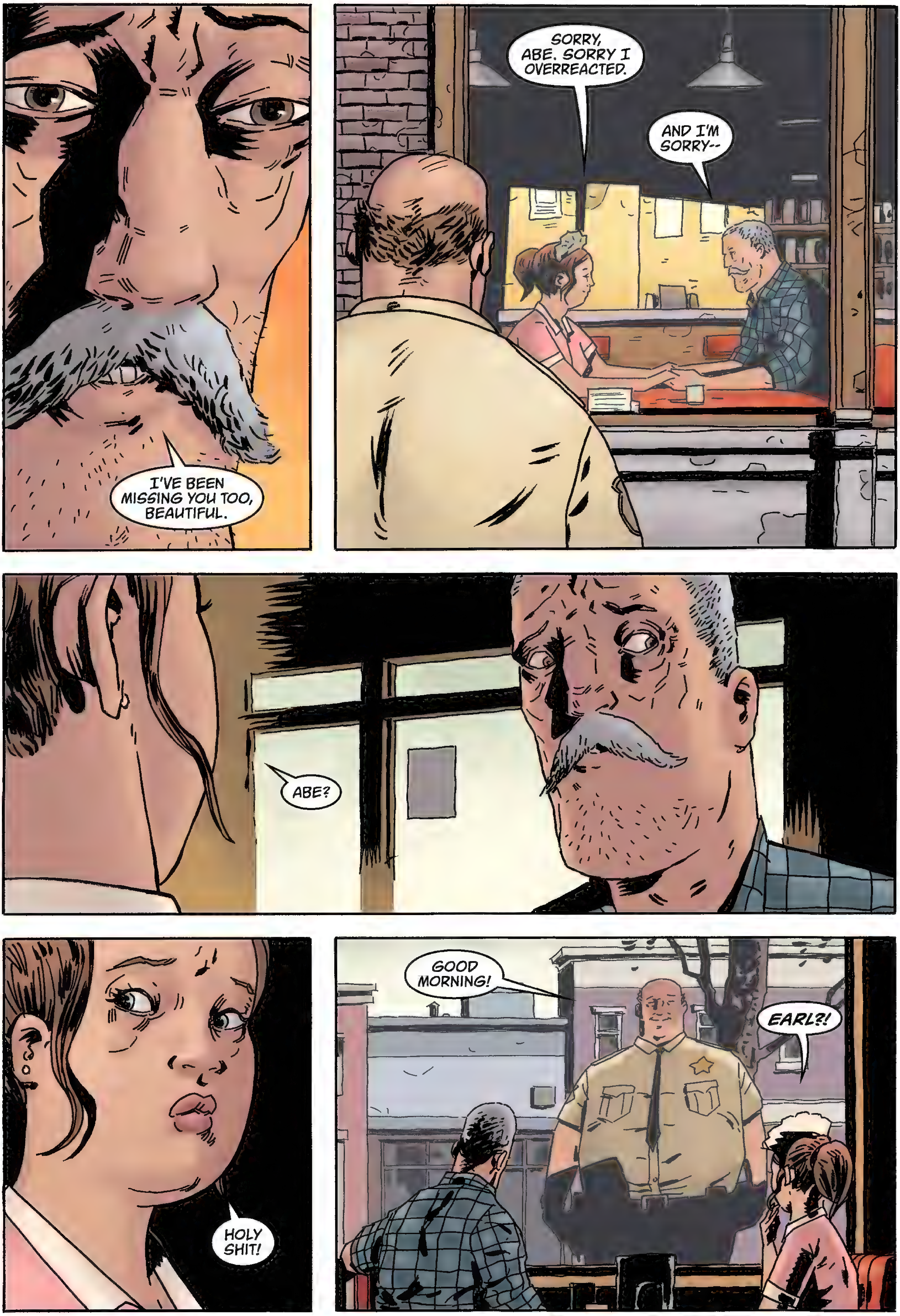
...TO STORYLAND.
13

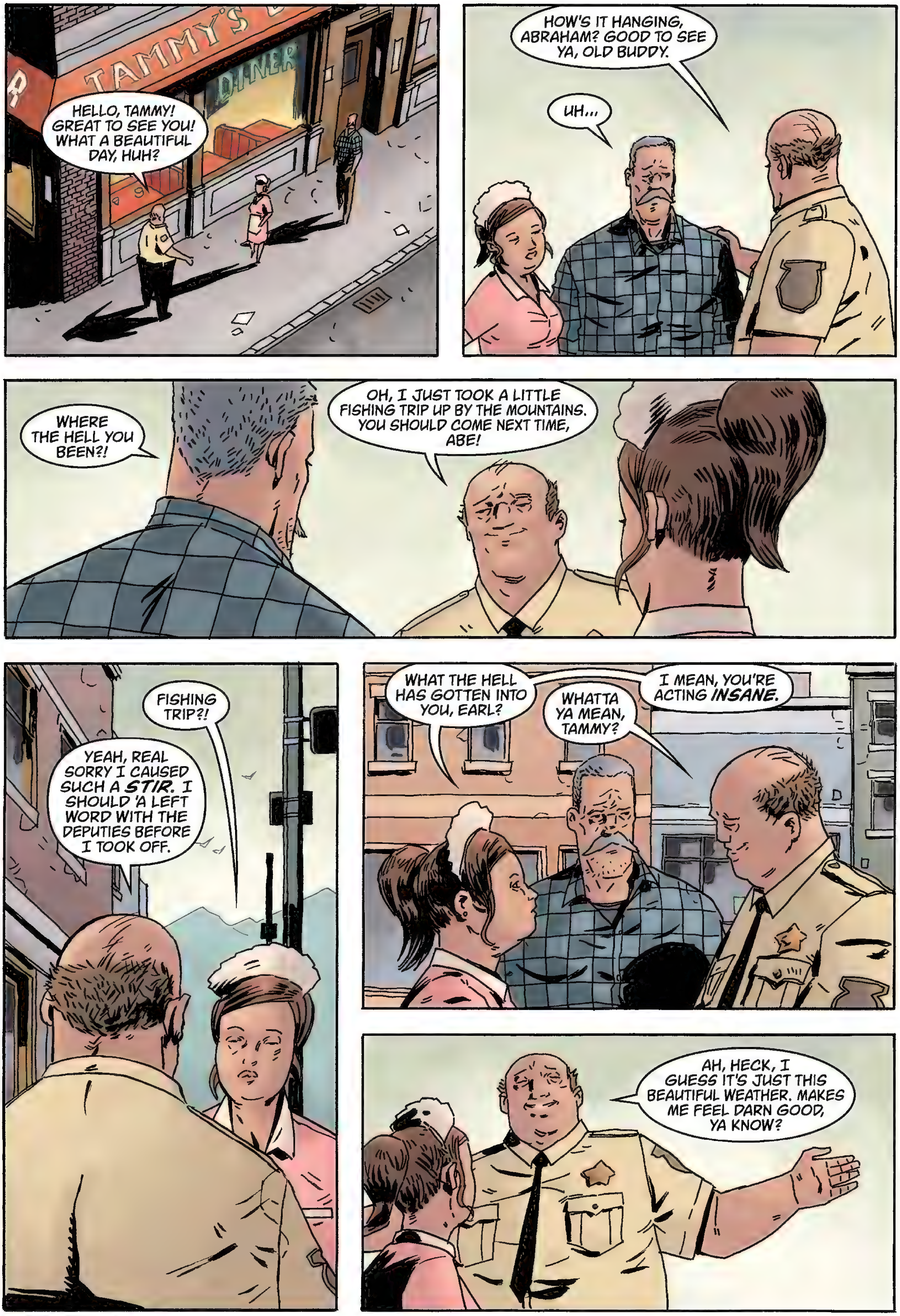
2
7
6
13

BLACK
HAMMER

DIN
SIGH OKAY, ABE, TIME TO MAN UP.
DING!
ABE?
TAMMY. I-- I THINK WE NEED TO TALK.

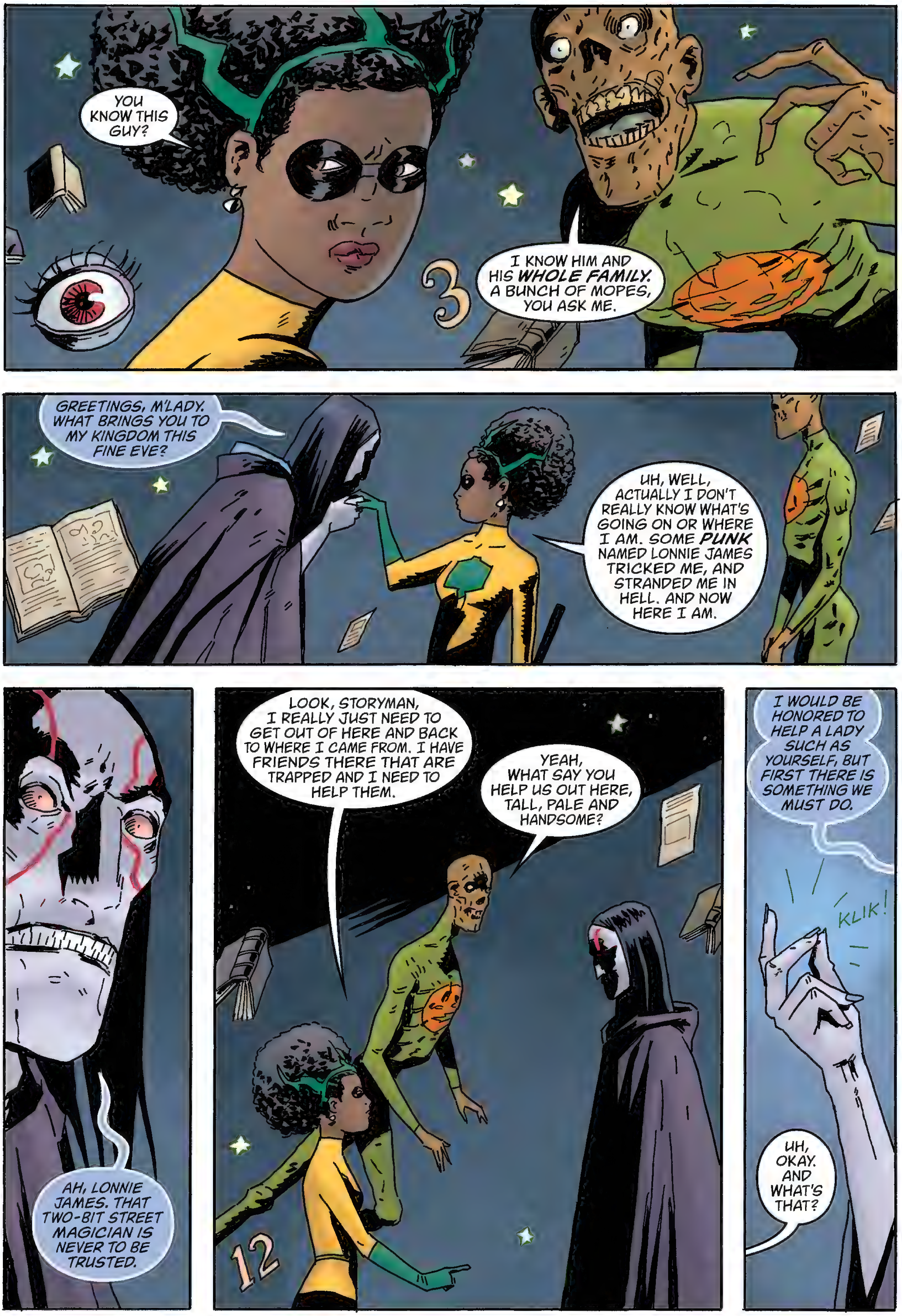

SO...
SO.
LOOK, TAMMY. I GET IT. I KNOW THIS WHOLE THING WITH EARL DISAPPEARING HAS BEEN HARD ON YOU. BUT YOU *HAVE* TO KNOW THAT I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.
I MEAN, YOU KNOW ME, TAMMY. NO MATTER HOW EARL TREATED YOU, AND HOW MUCH I WISH I COULD HAVE BROKEN HIS NOSE A FEW TIMES, I'D NEVER--
I--I KNOW.
IT'S ALL JUST BEEN SO-- I DON'T KNOW. AND THEN I START TO THINK MAYBE YOU AND I WERE GOING TOO FAST.
BUT THE TRUTH IS, I MISS YOU, ABE. I MEAN, I *REALLY* MISS YOU.

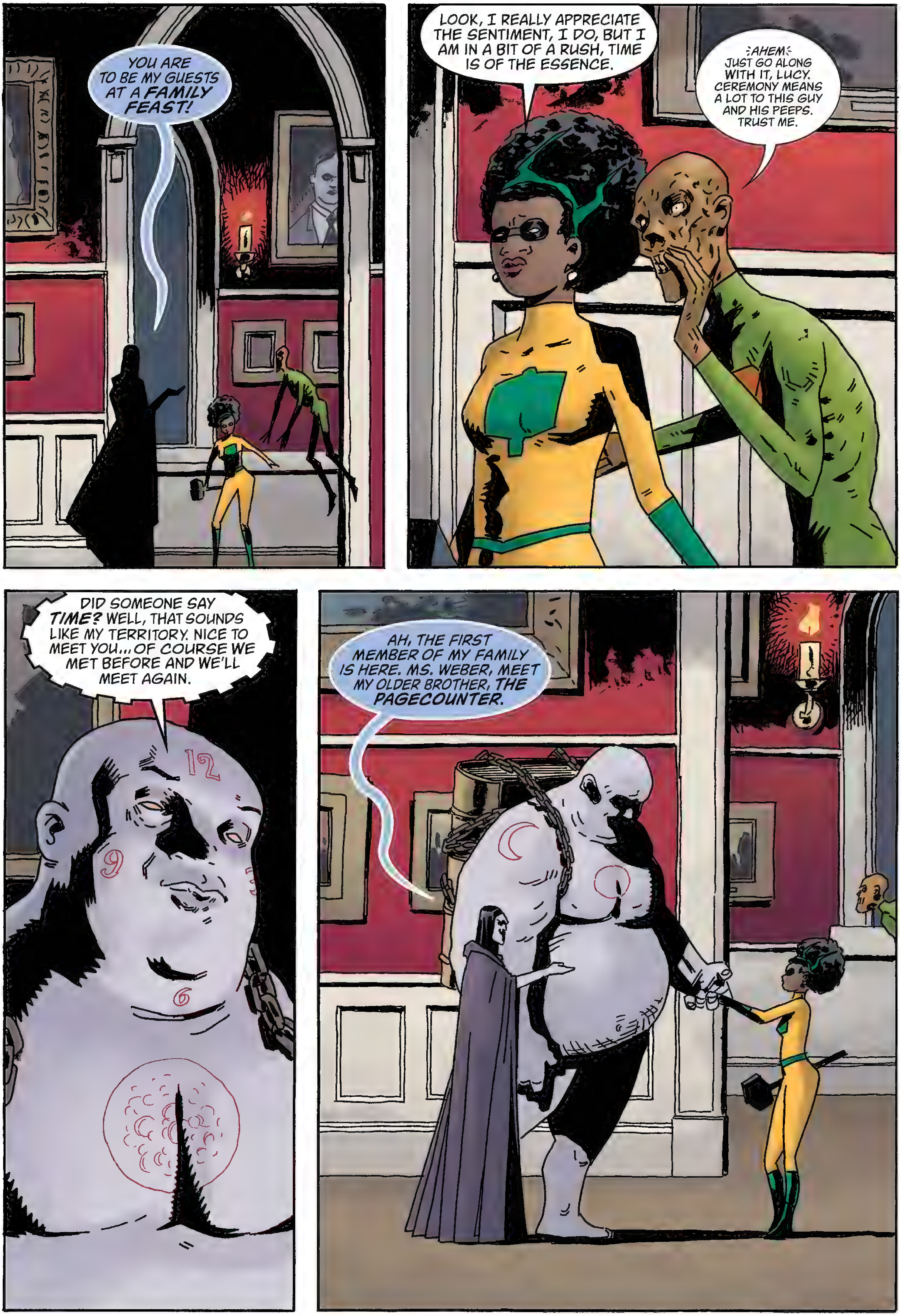

I'VE BEEN MISSING YOU TOO, BEAUTIFUL.
SORRY, ABE. SORRY I OVERREACTED.
AND I'M SORRY--
ABE?
HOLY SHIT!
GOOD MORNING!
EARL?!

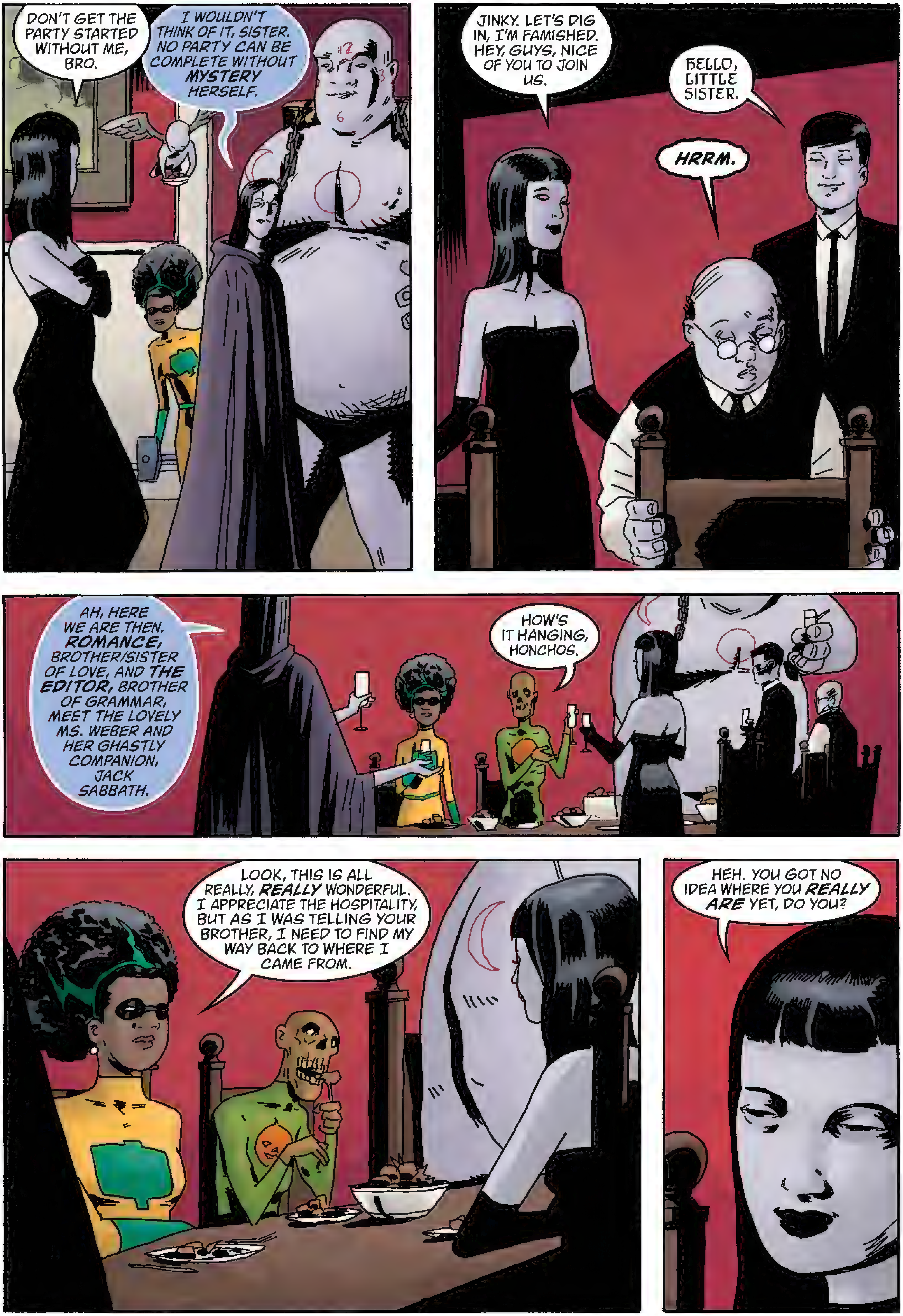

TAMMY'S DINER
HELLO, TAMMY! GREAT TO SEE YOU! WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY, HUH?
HOW'S IT HANGING, ABRAHAM? GOOD TO SEE YA, OLD BUDDY.
UH...
WHERE THE HELL YOU BEEN?!
OH, I JUST TOOK A LITTLE FISHING TRIP UP BY THE MOUNTAINS. YOU SHOULD COME NEXT TIME, ABE!
FISHING TRIP?!
YEAH, REAL SORRY I CAUSED SUCH A *STIR*. I SHOULD 'A LEFT WORD WITH THE DEPUTIES BEFORE I TOOK OFF.
WHAT THE HELL HAS GOTTEN INTO YOU, EARL?
I MEAN, YOU'RE ACTING *INSANE*.
WHATTA YA MEAN, TAMMY?
AH, HECK, I GUESS IT'S JUST THIS BEAUTIFUL WEATHER. MAKES ME FEEL DARN GOOD, YA KNOW?

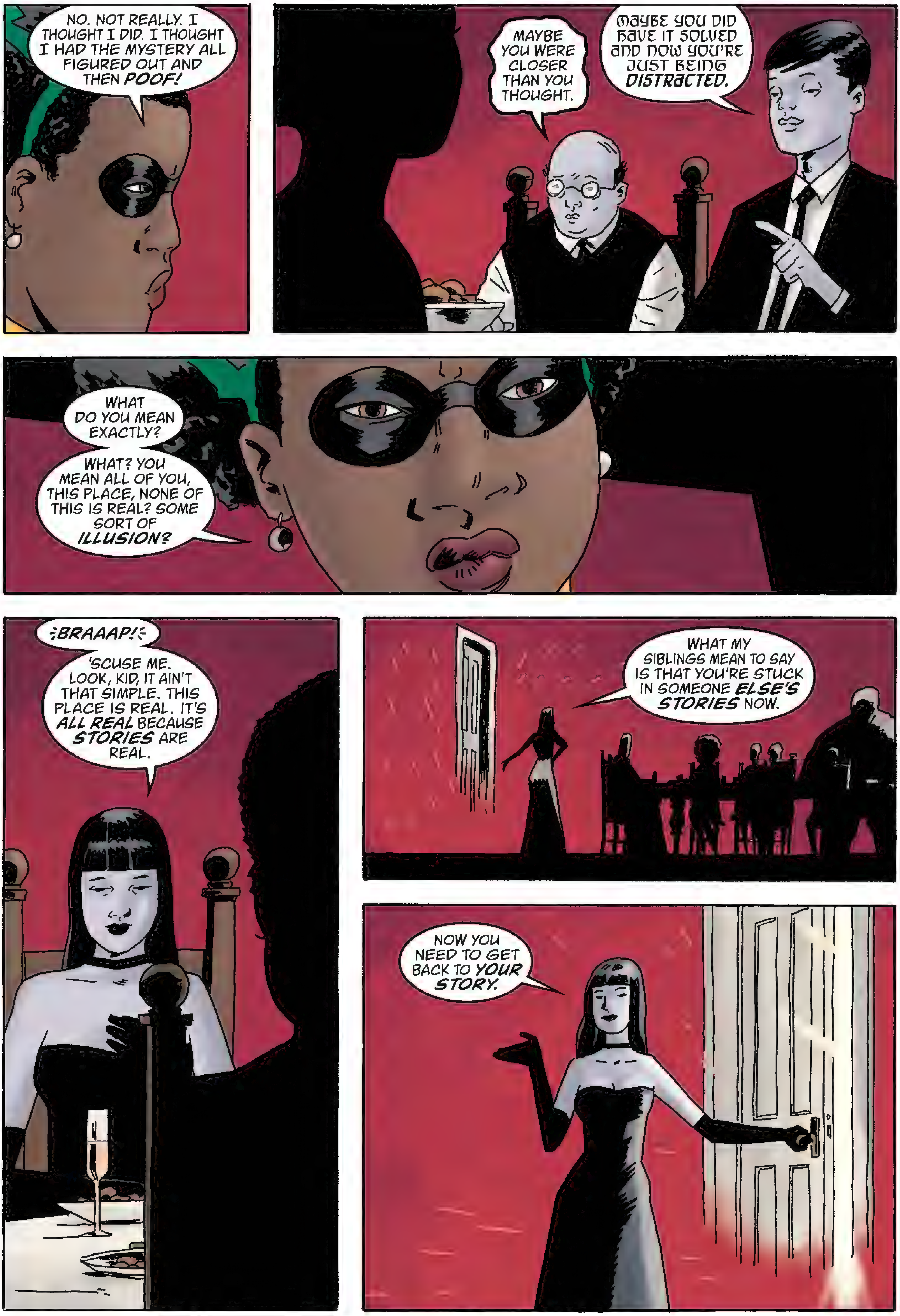
HEY, I EVER TELL YOU CRAZY KIDS HOW *GLAD* I AM YOU TWO FOUND EACH OTHER?
UH...
YOU BETTER TREAT HER GOOD THOUGH, ABE. TAMMY'S ONE IN A MILLION!
DINER
WELL, I'LL SEE YOU GUYS AROUND! GOTTA GET BACK TO WORK!
...WHAT THE FUCK JUST *HAPPENED,* ABE?

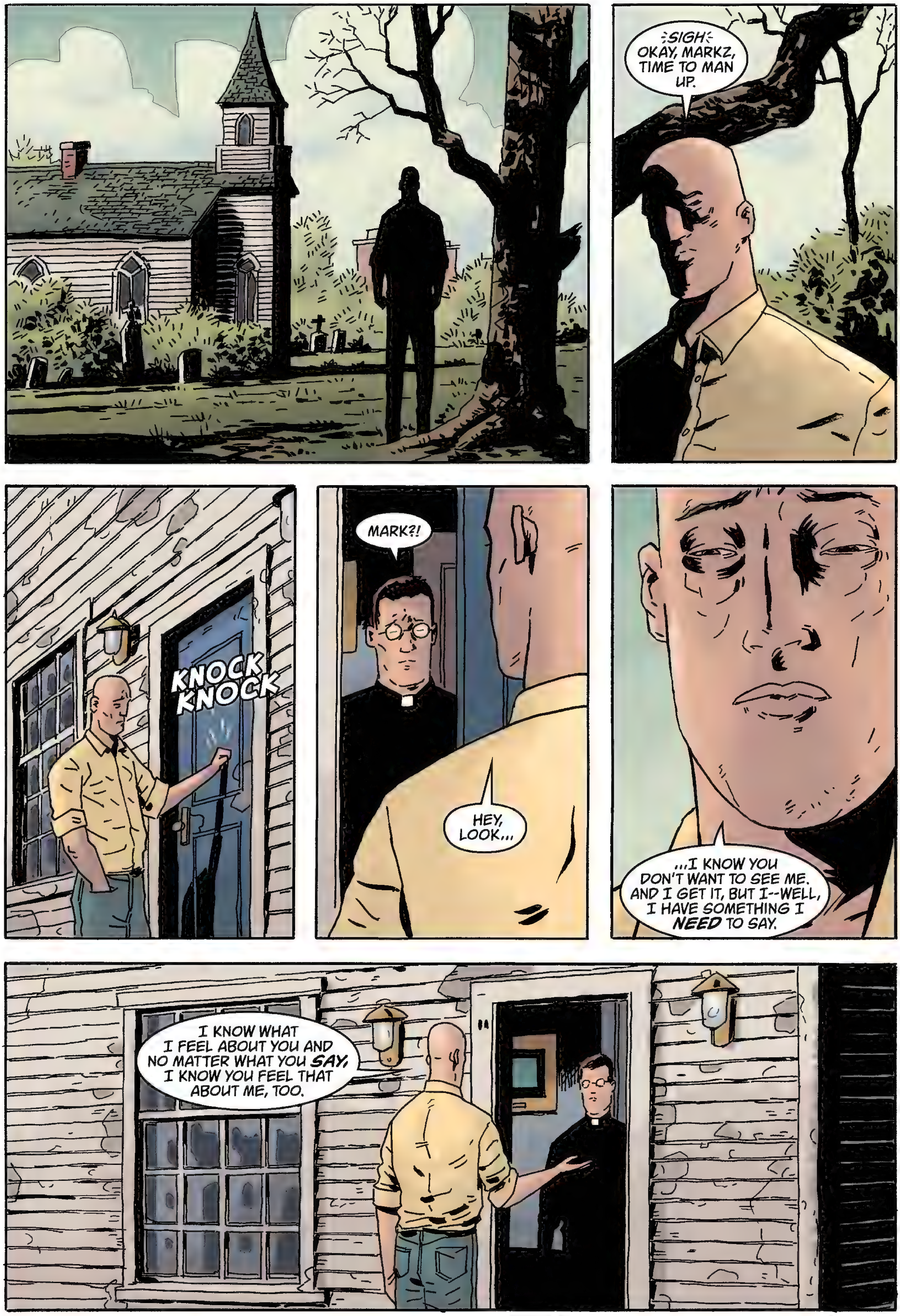
GREETINGS, TRAVELERS OF THE NIGHT. WELCOME.
WELCOME TO STORYLAND.
OH BROTHER. HERE WE GO.


YOU KNOW THIS GUY?
I KNOW HIM AND HIS *WHOLE FAMILY.* A BUNCH OF MOPES, YOU ASK ME.
3
GREETINGS, M'LADY. WHAT BRINGS YOU TO MY KINGDOM THIS FINE EVE?
UH, WELL, ACTUALLY I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON OR WHERE I AM. SOME *PUNK* NAMED LONNIE JAMES TRICKED ME, AND STRANDED ME IN HELL. AND NOW HERE I AM.
AH, LONNIE JAMES. THAT TWO-BIT STREET MAGICIAN IS NEVER TO BE TRUSTED.
LOOK, STORYMAN, I REALLY JUST NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE AND BACK TO WHERE I CAME FROM. I HAVE FRIENDS THERE THAT ARE TRAPPED AND I NEED TO HELP THEM.
YEAH, WHAT SAY YOU HELP US OUT HERE, TALL, PALE AND HANDSOME?
12
I WOULD BE HONORED TO HELP A LADY SUCH AS YOURSELF, BUT FIRST THERE IS SOMETHING WE MUST DO.
KLIK!
UH, OKAY. AND WHAT'S THAT?

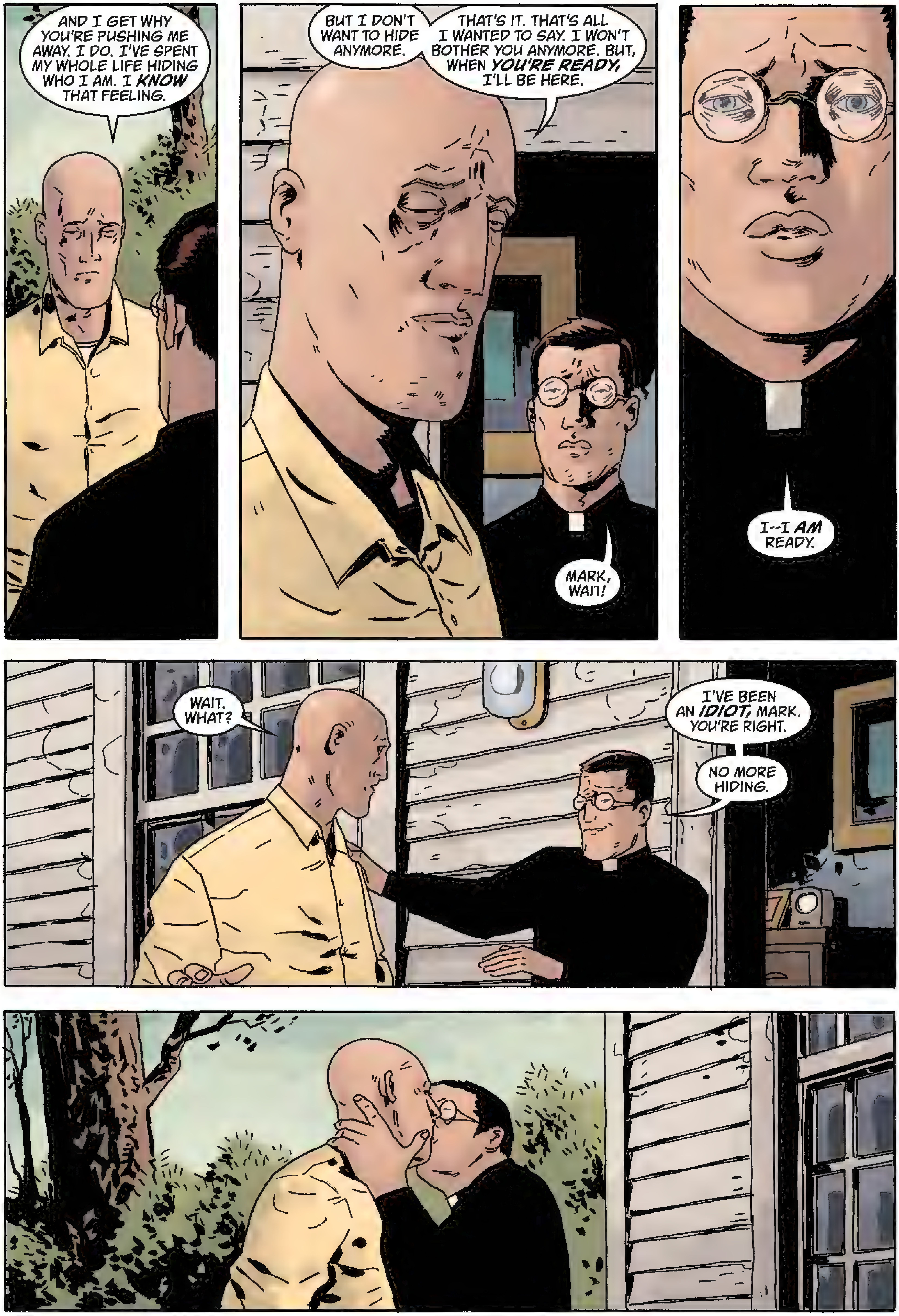

YOU ARE TO BE MY GUESTS AT A *FAMILY FEAST!*
LOOK, I REALLY APPRECIATE THE SENTIMENT, I DO, BUT I AM IN A BIT OF A RUSH, TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE.
AHEM JUST GO ALONG WITH IT, LUCY. CEREMONY MEANS A LOT TO THIS GUY AND HIS PEEPS. TRUST ME.
DID SOMEONE SAY ***TIME?*** WELL, THAT SOUNDS LIKE MY TERRITORY. NICE TO MEET YOU... OF COURSE WE MET BEFORE AND WE'LL MEET AGAIN.
AH, THE FIRST MEMBER OF MY FAMILY IS HERE. MS. WEBER, MEET MY OLDER BROTHER, ***THE PAGECOUNTER.***


DON'T GET THE PARTY STARTED WITHOUT ME, BRO.
I WOULDN'T THINK OF IT, SISTER. NO PARTY CAN BE COMPLETE WITHOUT **MYSTERY** HERSELF.
JINKY. LET'S DIG IN, I'M FAMISHED. HEY, GUYS, NICE OF YOU TO JOIN US.
HELLO, LITTLE SISTER.
HRRM.
AH, HERE WE ARE THEN. **ROMANCE,** BROTHER/SISTER OF LOVE, AND **THE EDITOR,** BROTHER OF GRAMMAR, MEET THE LOVELY MS. WEBER AND HER GHASTLY COMPANION, JACK SABBATH.
HOW'S IT HANGING, HONCHOS.
LOOK, THIS IS ALL REALLY, **REALLY** WONDERFUL. I APPRECIATE THE HOSPITALITY, BUT AS I WAS TELLING YOUR BROTHER, I NEED TO FIND MY WAY BACK TO WHERE I CAME FROM.
HEH. YOU GOT NO IDEA WHERE YOU **REALLY ARE** YET, DO YOU?

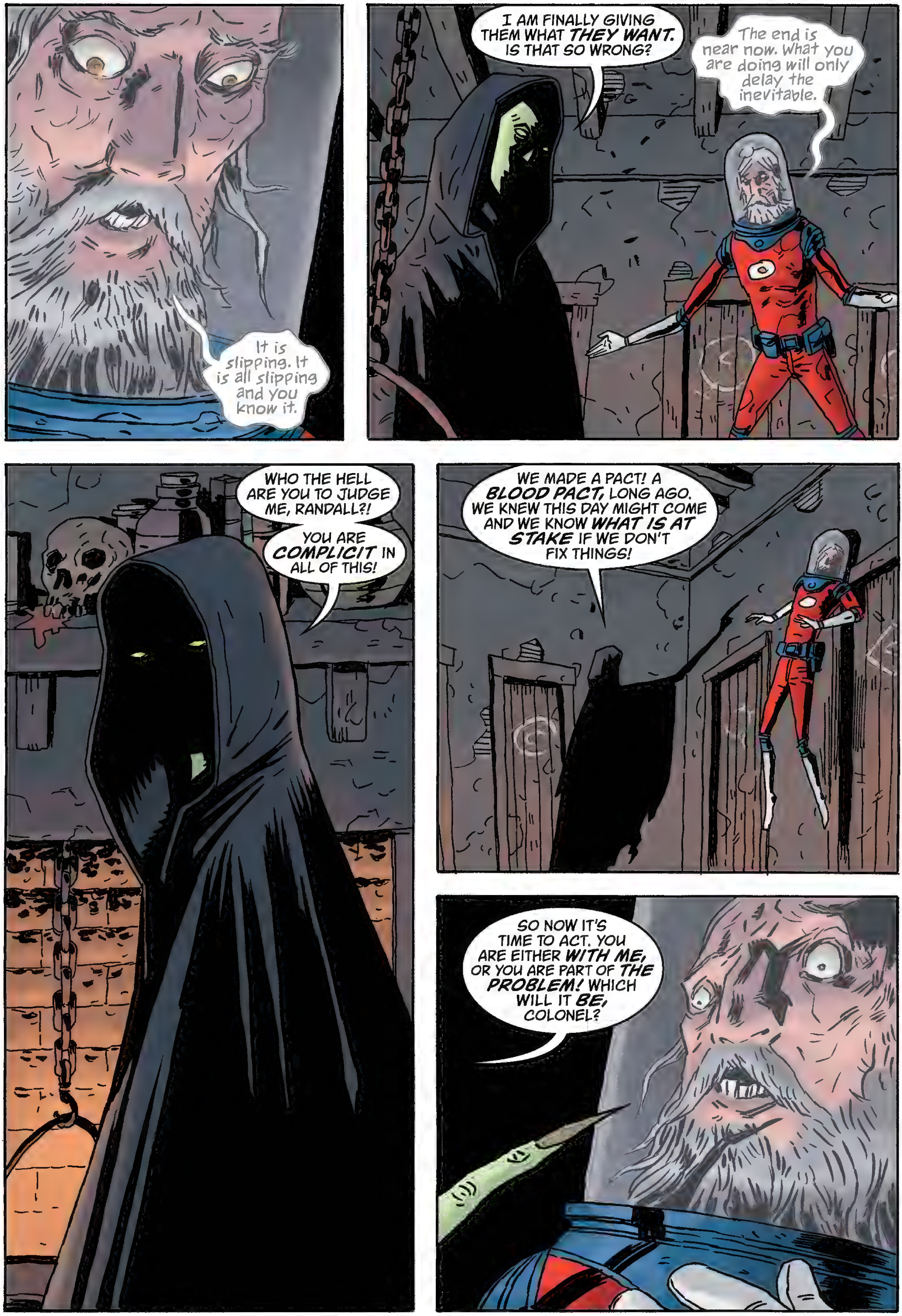

NO. NOT REALLY. I THOUGHT I DID. I THOUGHT I HAD THE MYSTERY ALL FIGURED OUT AND THEN POOF!
MAYBE YOU WERE CLOSER THAN YOU THOUGHT.
MAYBE YOU DID HAVE IT SOLVED AND NOW YOU'RE JUST BEING DISTRACTED.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN EXACTLY?
WHAT? YOU MEAN ALL OF YOU, THIS PLACE, NONE OF THIS IS REAL? SOME SORT OF ILLUSION?
BRAAAP!
'SCUSE ME. LOOK, KID, IT AIN'T THAT SIMPLE. THIS PLACE IS REAL. IT'S ALL REAL BECAUSE STORIES ARE REAL.
WHAT MY SIBLINGS MEAN TO SAY IS THAT YOU'RE STUCK IN SOMEONE ELSE'S STORIES NOW.
NOW YOU NEED TO GET BACK TO YOUR STORY.

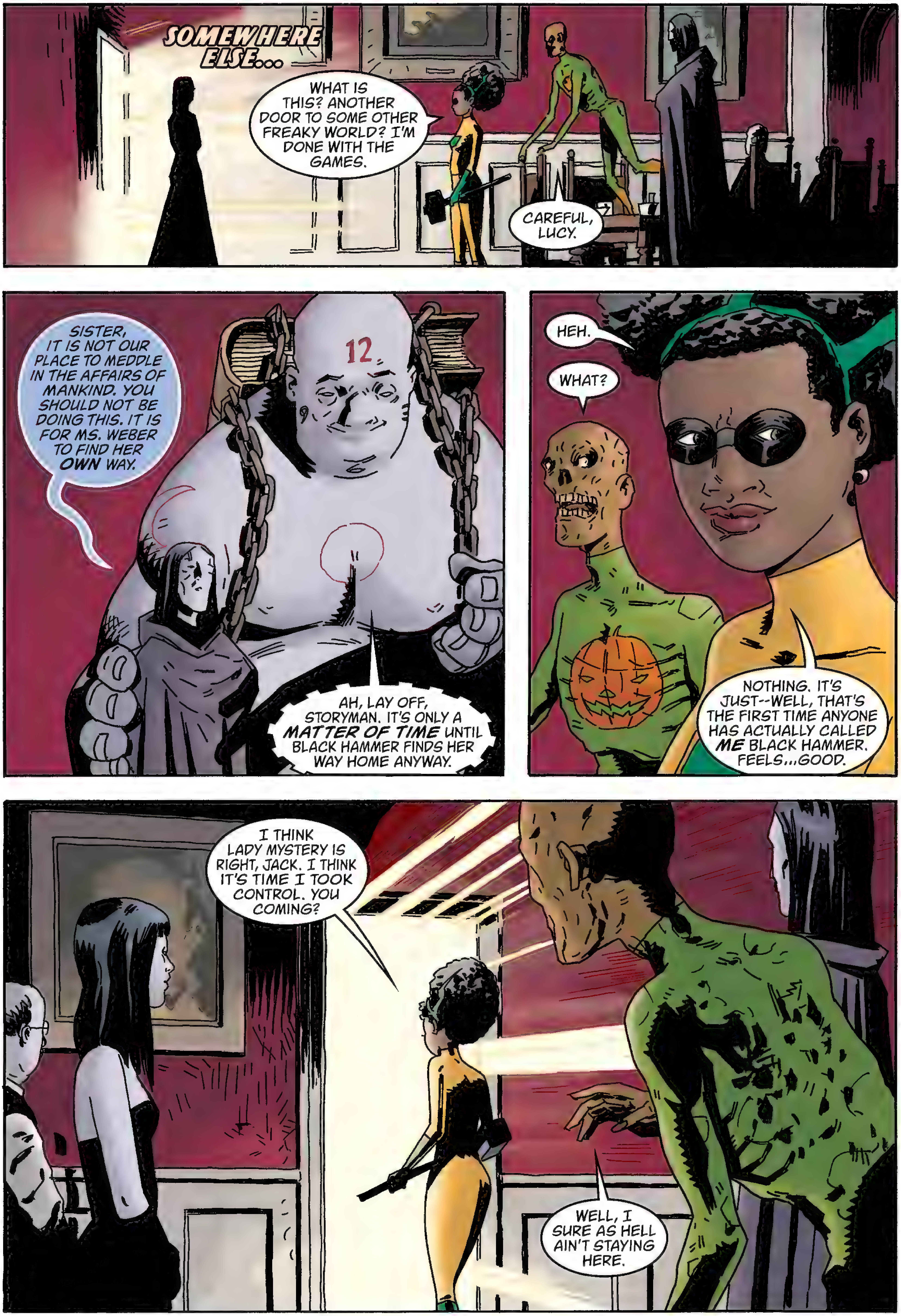


-SIGH- OKAY, MARKZ, TIME TO MAN UP.
KNOCK KNOCK
MARK?!
HEY, LOOK...
...I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE ME. AND I GET IT, BUT I--WELL, I HAVE SOMETHING I **NEED** TO SAY.
I KNOW WHAT I FEEL ABOUT YOU AND NO MATTER WHAT YOU ***SAY,*** I KNOW YOU FEEL THAT ABOUT ME, TOO.

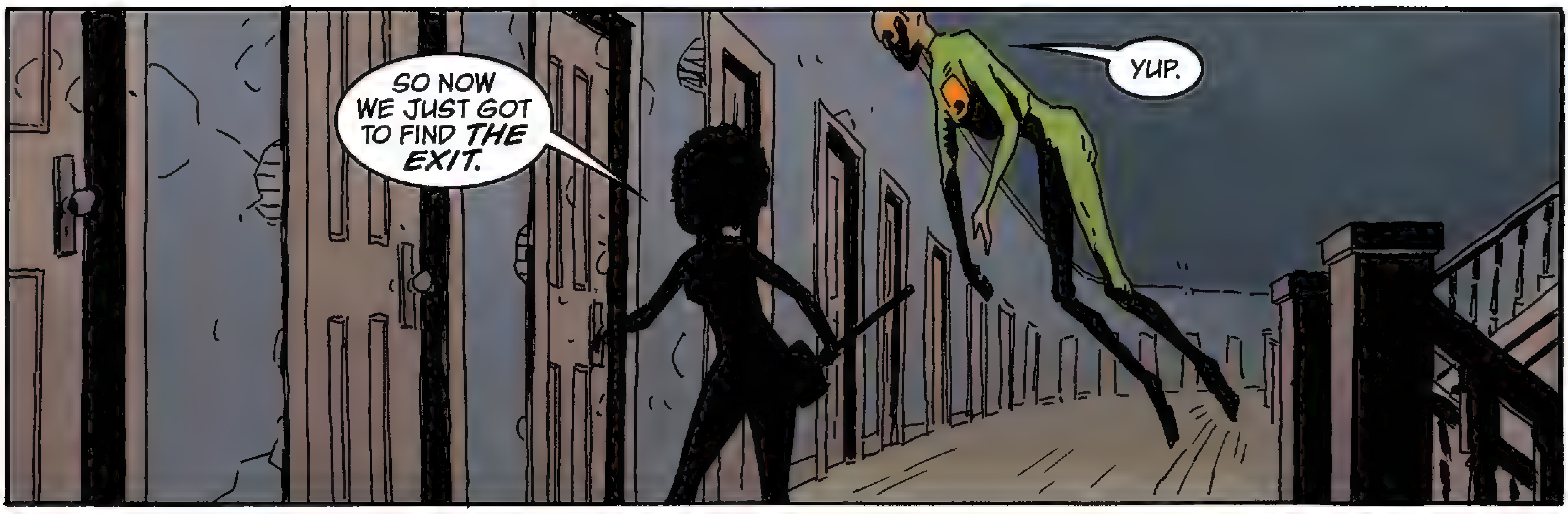

AND I GET WHY YOU'RE PUSHING ME AWAY. I DO. I'VE SPENT MY WHOLE LIFE HIDING WHO I AM. I **KNOW** THAT FEELING.
BUT I DON'T WANT TO HIDE ANYMORE.
THAT'S IT. THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO SAY. I WON'T BOTHER YOU ANYMORE. BUT, WHEN ***YOU'RE READY,*** I'LL BE HERE.
MARK, WAIT!
I--I ***AM*** READY.
WAIT. WHAT?
I'VE BEEN AN ***IDIOT,*** MARK. YOU'RE RIGHT.
NO MORE HIDING.

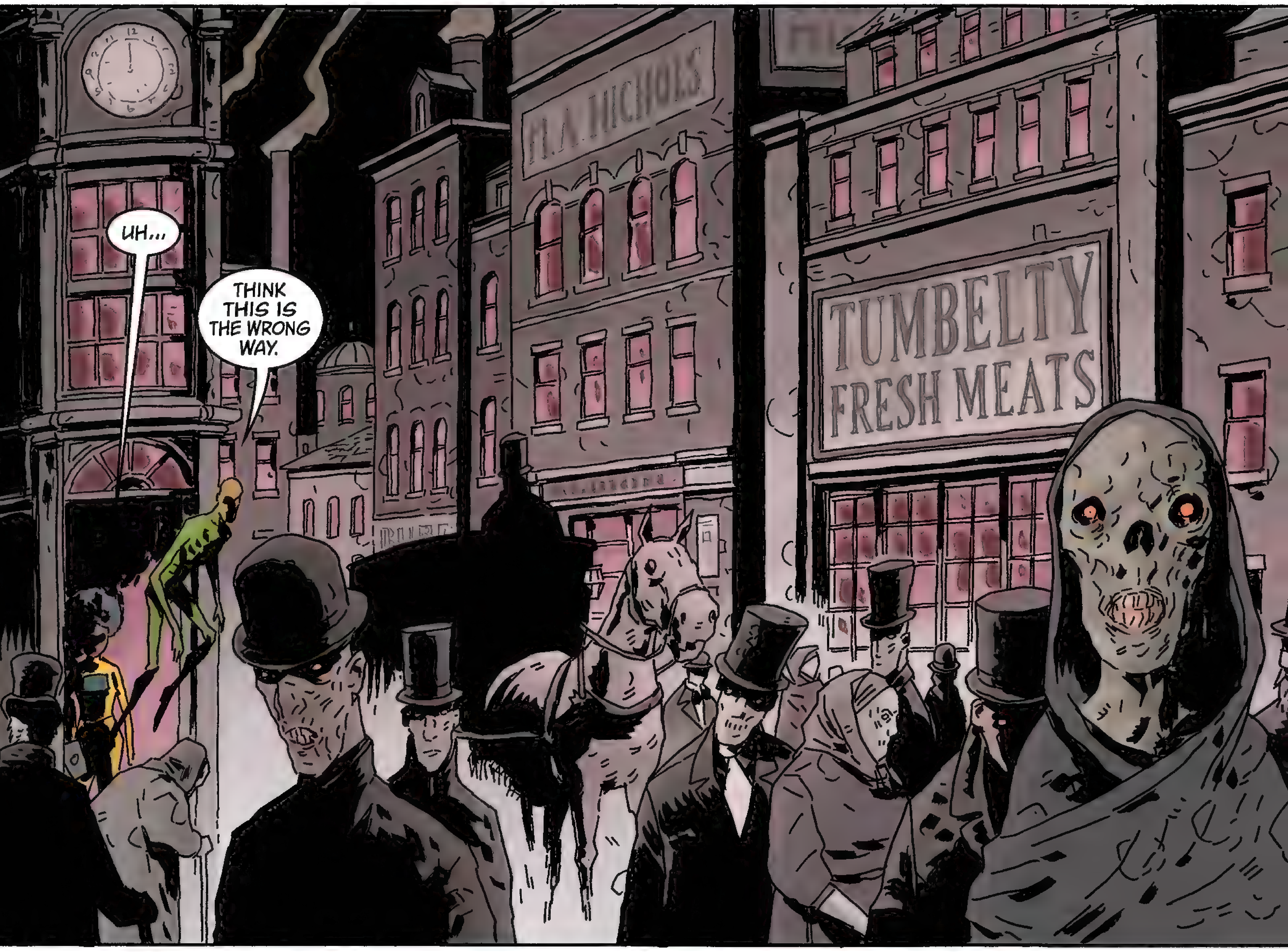
NO MORE HIDING.
HUMPH! IF ONLY.
This is wrong. What you are doing is very very *wrong*, Madame.
Giving them what they think they want... it will only delay the inevitable.
AND THAT WOULD BE DIFFERENT FROM EVERYTHING WE HAVE DONE IN THE ***LAST TEN YEARS*** HOW, EXACTLY, COLONEL?

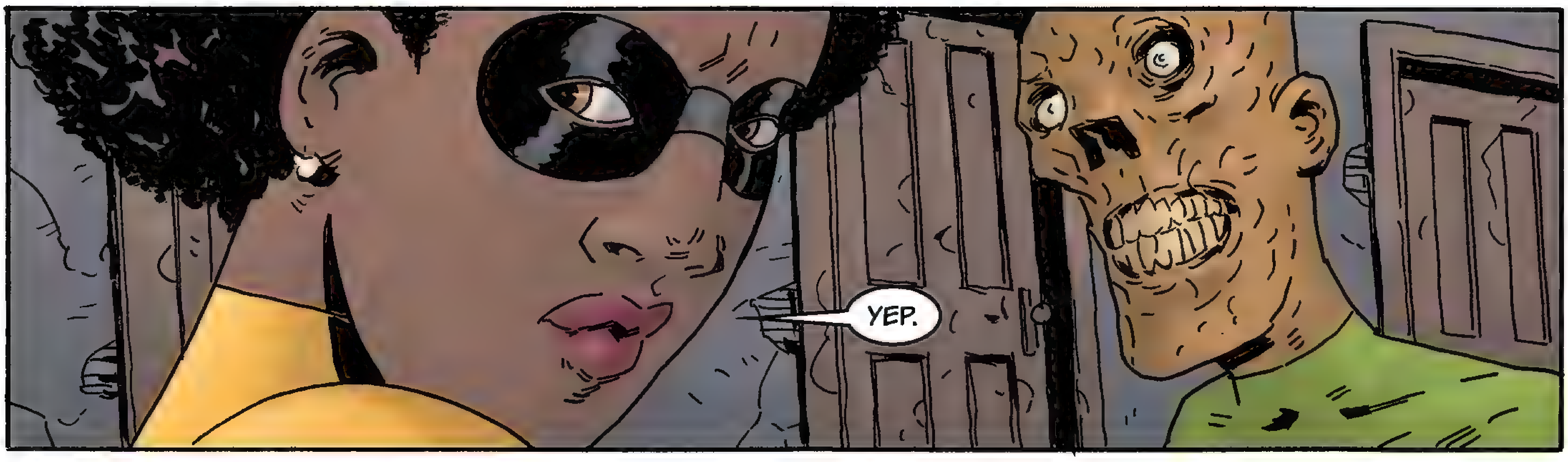

It is slipping. It is all slipping and you know it.
I AM FINALLY GIVING THEM WHAT THEY WANT. IS THAT SO WRONG?
The end is near now. What you are doing will only delay the inevitable.
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU TO JUDGE ME, RANDALL?!
YOU ARE COMPLICIT IN ALL OF THIS!
WE MADE A PACT! A BLOOD PACT, LONG AGO. WE KNEW THIS DAY MIGHT COME AND WE KNOW WHAT IS AT STAKE IF WE DON'T FIX THINGS!
SO NOW IT'S TIME TO ACT. YOU ARE EITHER WITH ME, OR YOU ARE PART OF THE PROBLEM! WHICH WILL IT BE, COLONEL?

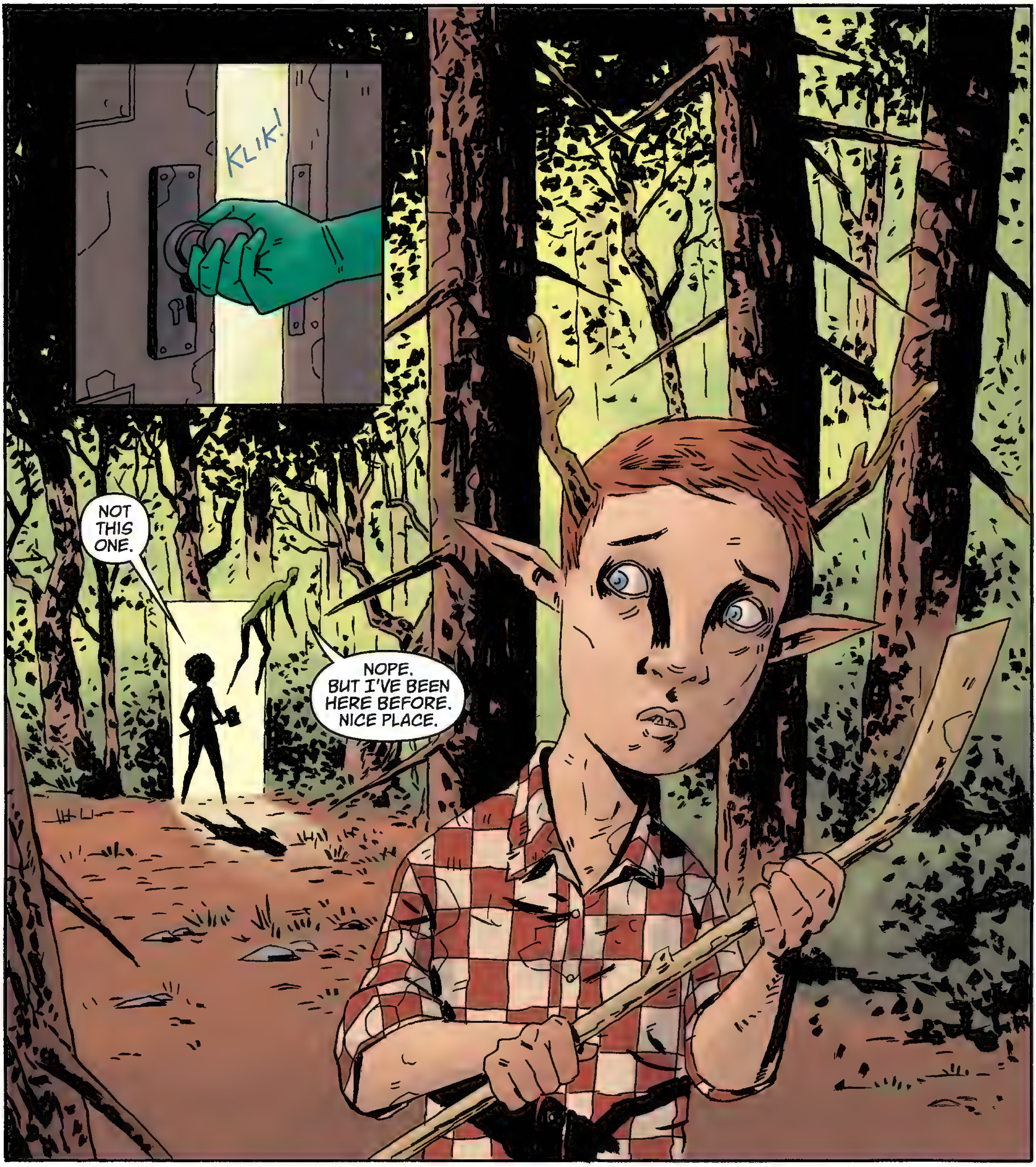

SOMEWHERE ELSE...
WHAT IS THIS? ANOTHER DOOR TO SOME OTHER FREAKY WORLD? I'M DONE WITH THE GAMES.
CAREFUL, LUCY.
SISTER, IT IS NOT OUR PLACE TO MEDDLE IN THE AFFAIRS OF MANKIND. YOU SHOULD NOT BE DOING THIS. IT IS FOR MS. WEBER TO FIND HER **OWN** WAY.
12
AH, LAY OFF, STORYMAN. IT'S ONLY A ***MATTER OF TIME*** UNTIL BLACK HAMMER FINDS HER WAY HOME ANYWAY.
HEH.
WHAT?
NOTHING. IT'S JUST--WELL, THAT'S THE FIRST TIME ANYONE HAS ACTUALLY CALLED ***ME*** BLACK HAMMER. FEELS...GOOD.
I THINK LADY MYSTERY IS RIGHT, JACK. I THINK IT'S TIME I TOOK CONTROL. YOU COMING?
WELL, I SURE AS HELL AIN'T STAYING HERE.

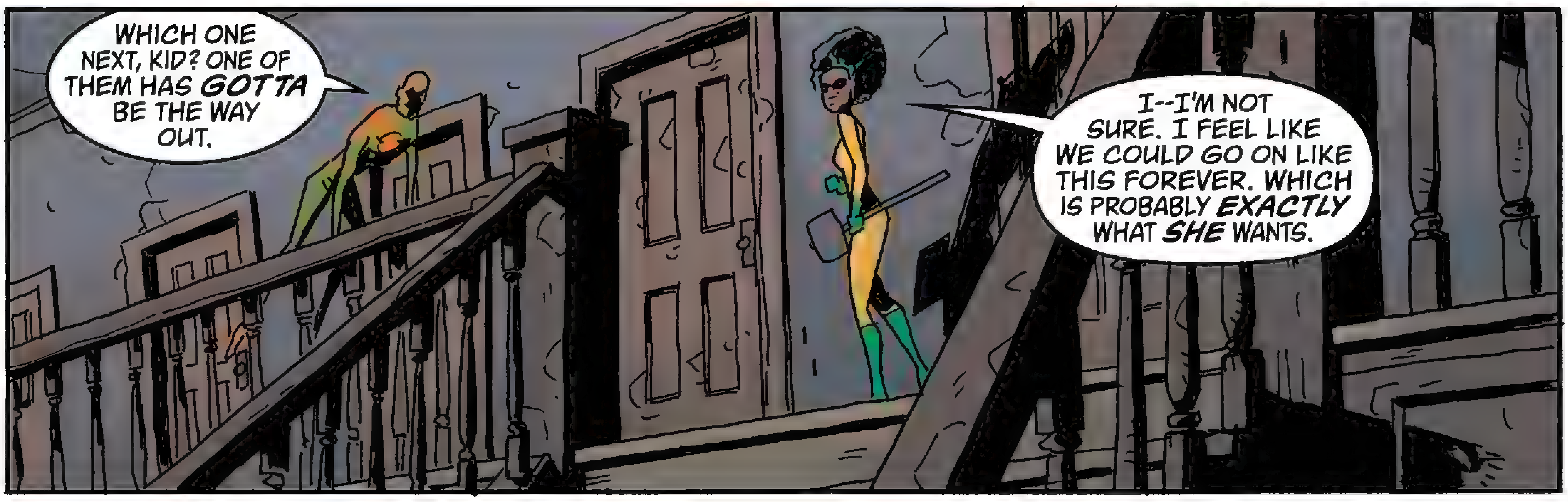
THE ANTEROOM. WE'RE BACK ABOVE THE ANTEROOM.
THIS AIN'T THE ANTEROOM, KIDDO.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I MEAN THE ANTEROOM IS ONLY *ONE* PLACE *INSIDE* OF *THIS PLACE.*
...
I THINK I KNOW WHERE THIS IS.
I KNEW YOU'D GET THERE, KID. SECOND I SAW YOU I KNEW THERE WAS NO PULLING THE WOOL OVER YOUR EYES.

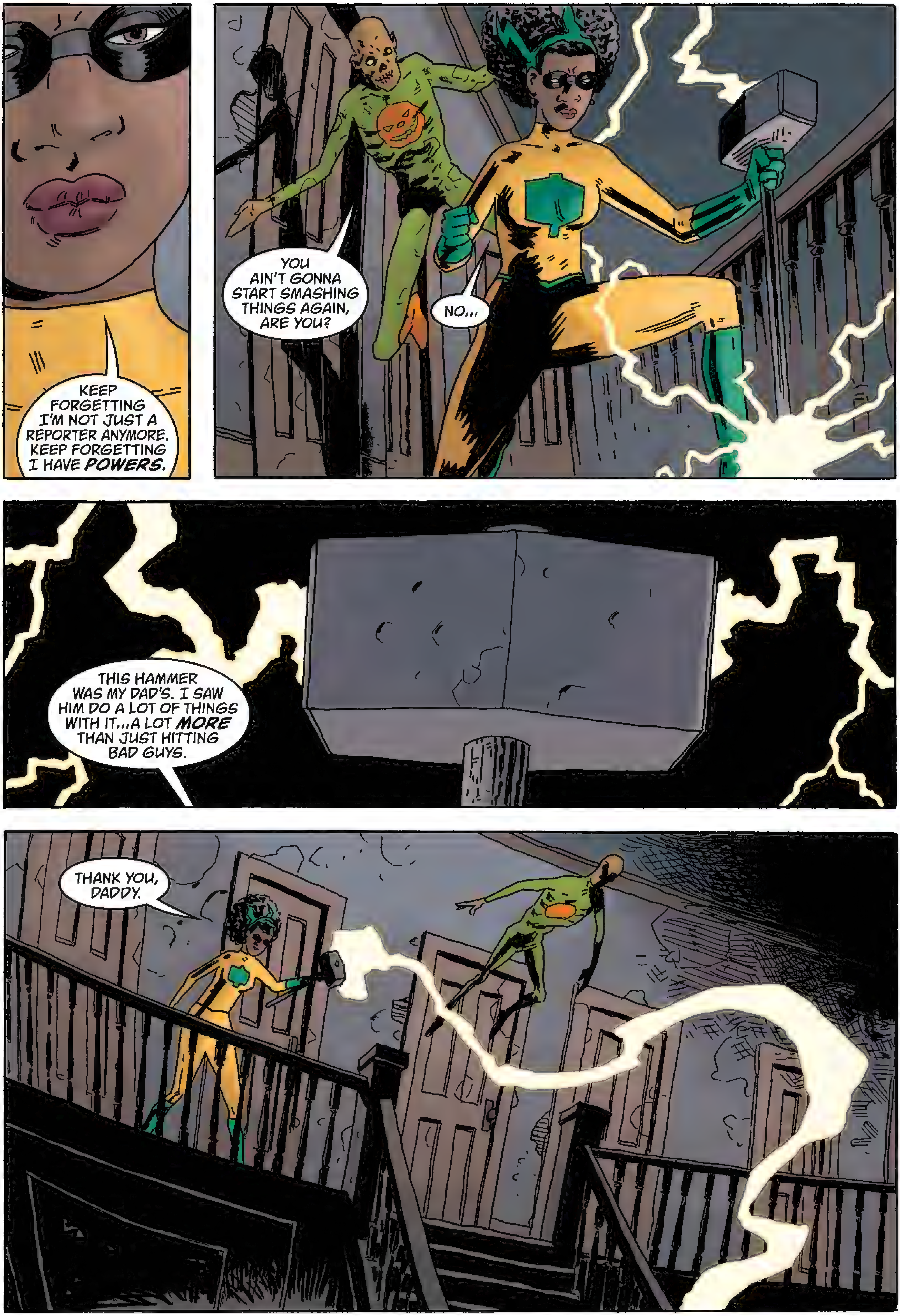

SO NOW WE JUST GOT TO FIND ***THE EXIT.***
YUP.

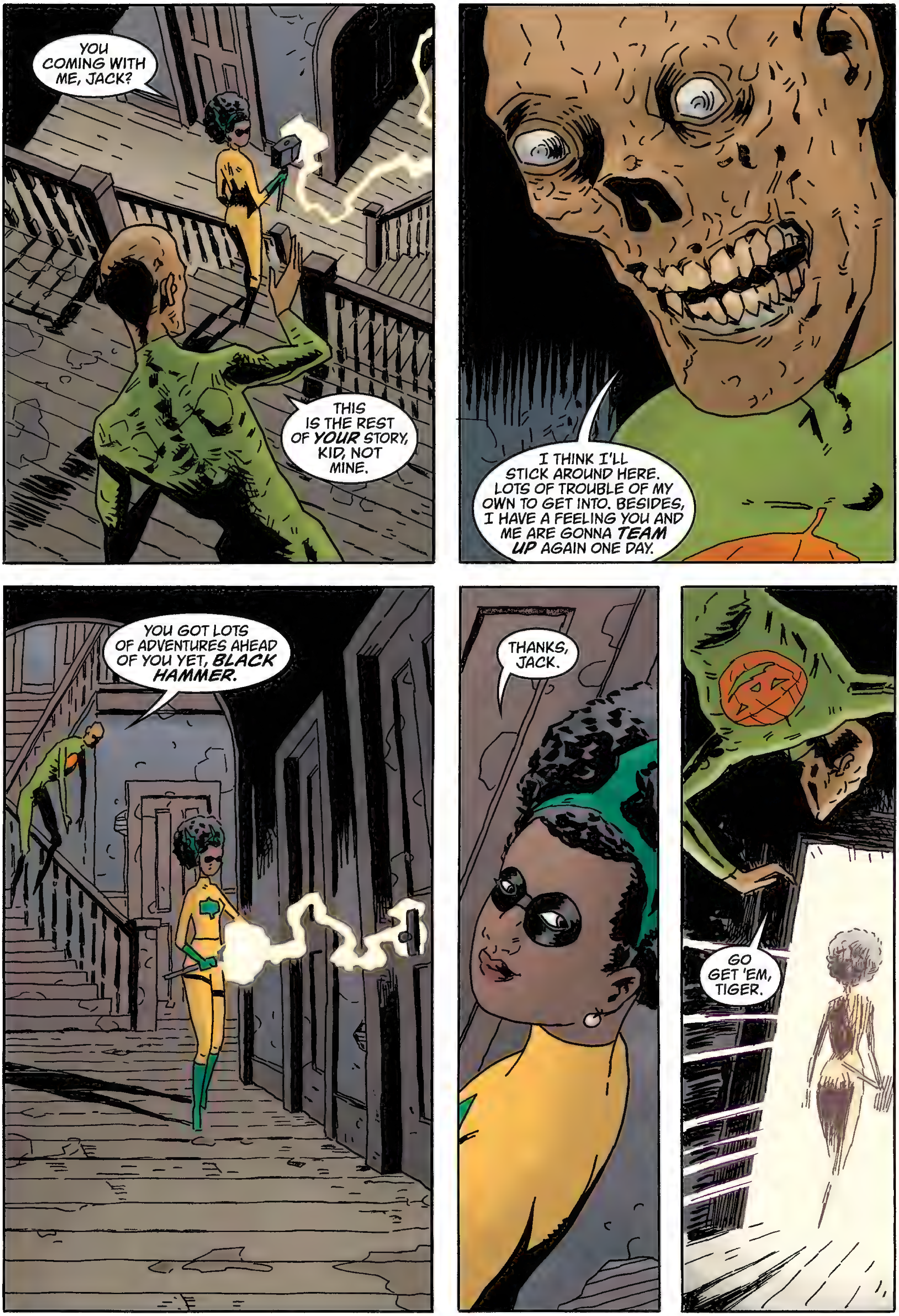

H.A. NICHOLS
UH...
THINK THIS IS THE WRONG WAY.
TUMBELTY FRESH MEATS


YEP.


KLIK!
NOT THIS ONE.
NOPE. BUT I'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE. NICE PLACE.


WHICH ONE NEXT, KID? ONE OF THEM HAS *GOTTA* BE THE WAY OUT.
I--I'M NOT SURE. I FEEL LIKE WE COULD GO ON LIKE THIS FOREVER. WHICH IS PROBABLY *EXACTLY* WHAT *SHE* WANTS.


KEEP FORGETTING I'M NOT JUST A REPORTER ANYMORE. KEEP FORGETTING I HAVE *POWERS.*
YOU AIN'T GONNA START SMASHING THINGS AGAIN, ARE YOU?
NO...
THIS HAMMER WAS MY DAD'S. I SAW HIM DO A LOT OF THINGS WITH IT...A LOT *MORE* THAN JUST HITTING BAD GUYS.
THANK YOU, DADDY.


YOU COMING WITH ME, JACK?
THIS IS THE REST OF *YOUR* STORY, KID, NOT MINE.
I THINK I'LL STICK AROUND HERE. LOTS OF TROUBLE OF MY OWN TO GET INTO. BESIDES, I HAVE A FEELING YOU AND ME ARE GONNA *TEAM UP* AGAIN ONE DAY.
YOU GOT LOTS OF ADVENTURES AHEAD OF YOU YET, *BLACK HAMMER.*
THANKS, JACK.
GO GET 'EM, TIGER.

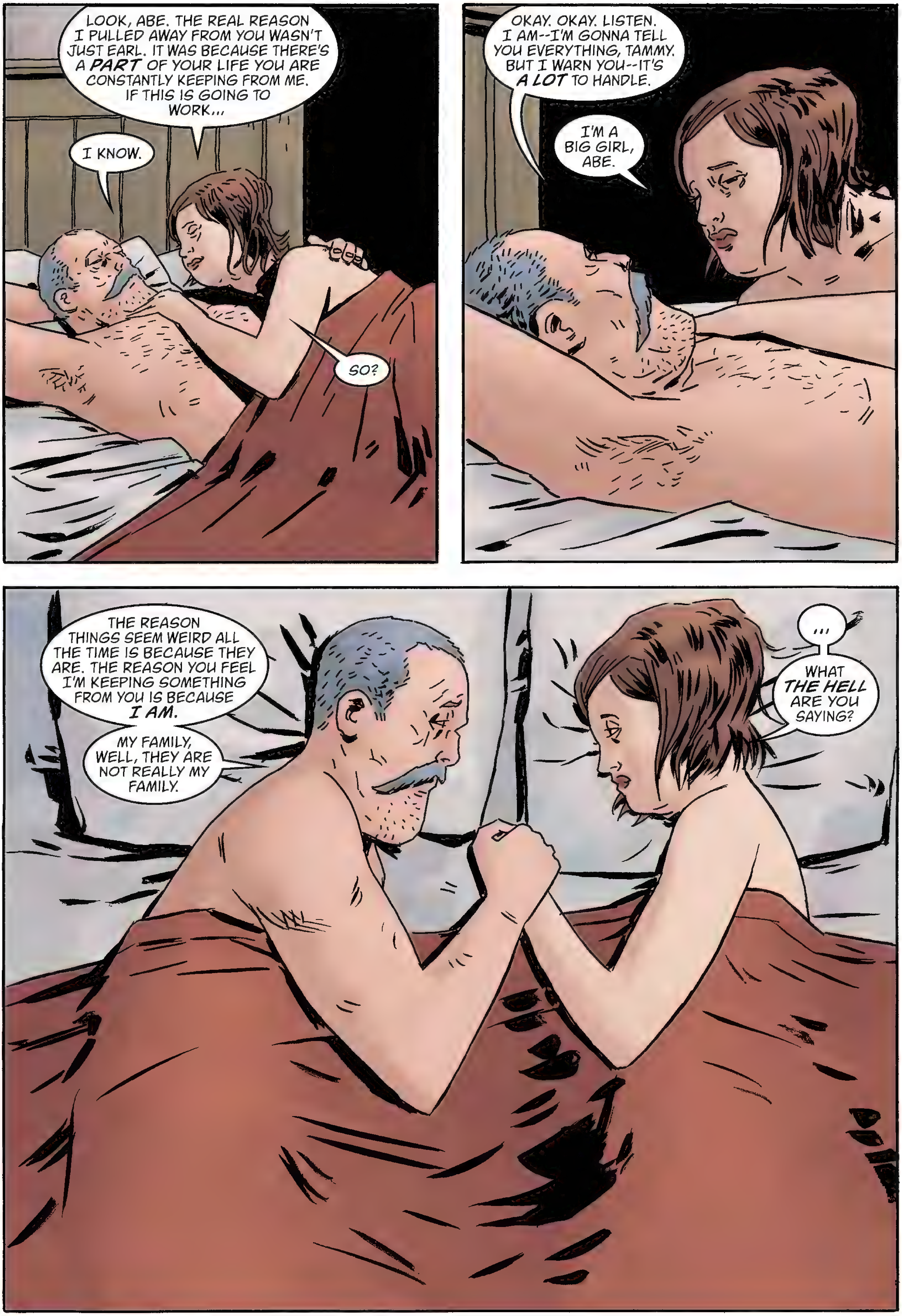
SO...YOU FOUND THE WAY *OUT*. FASTER THAN I THOUGHT YOU WOULD.
IT'S OVER, MADAME DRAGONFLY. NO MORE SECRETS. NO MORE MYSTERIES.
IT'S TIME FOR THE *TRUTH*.
Uh oh.

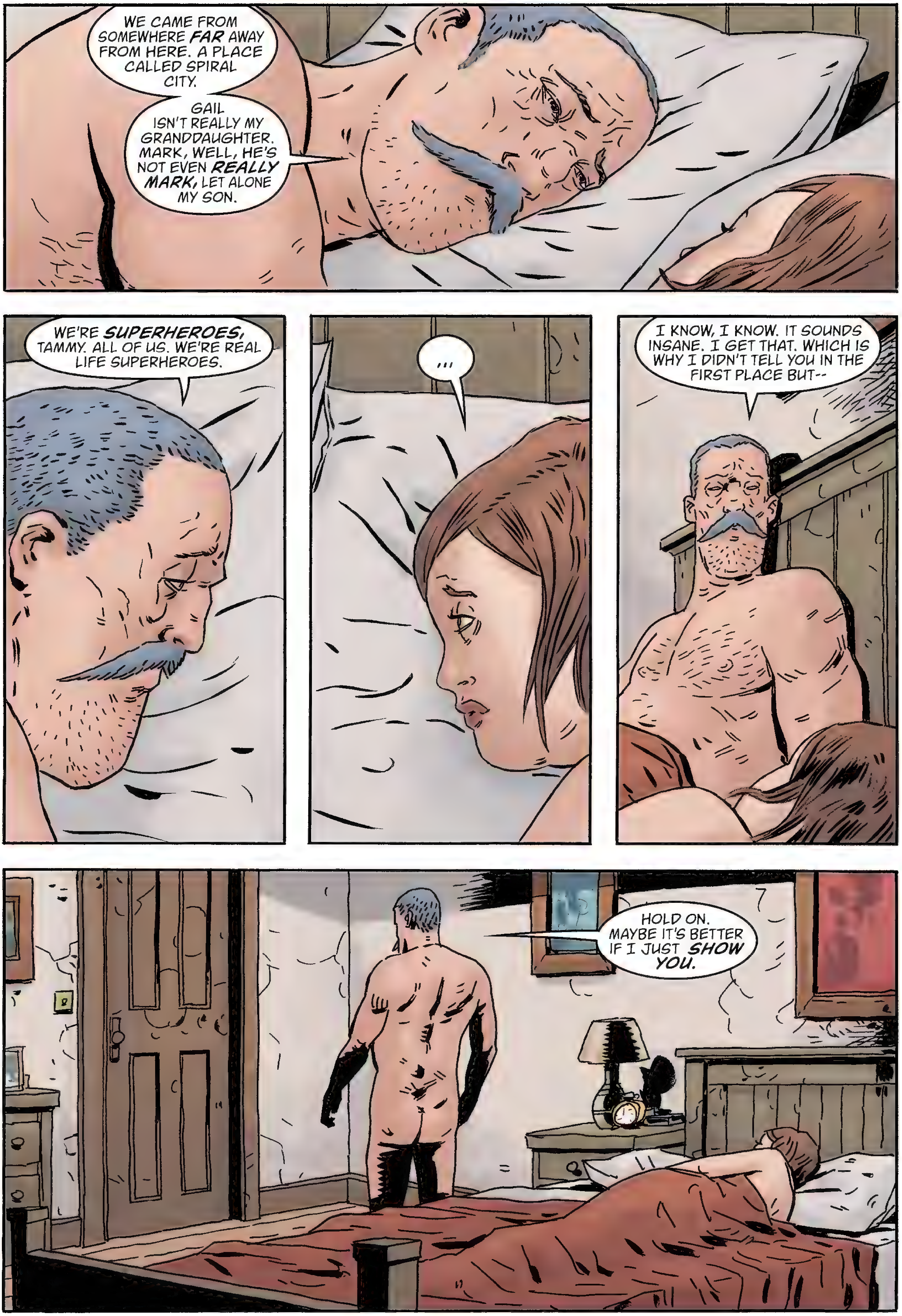
2017

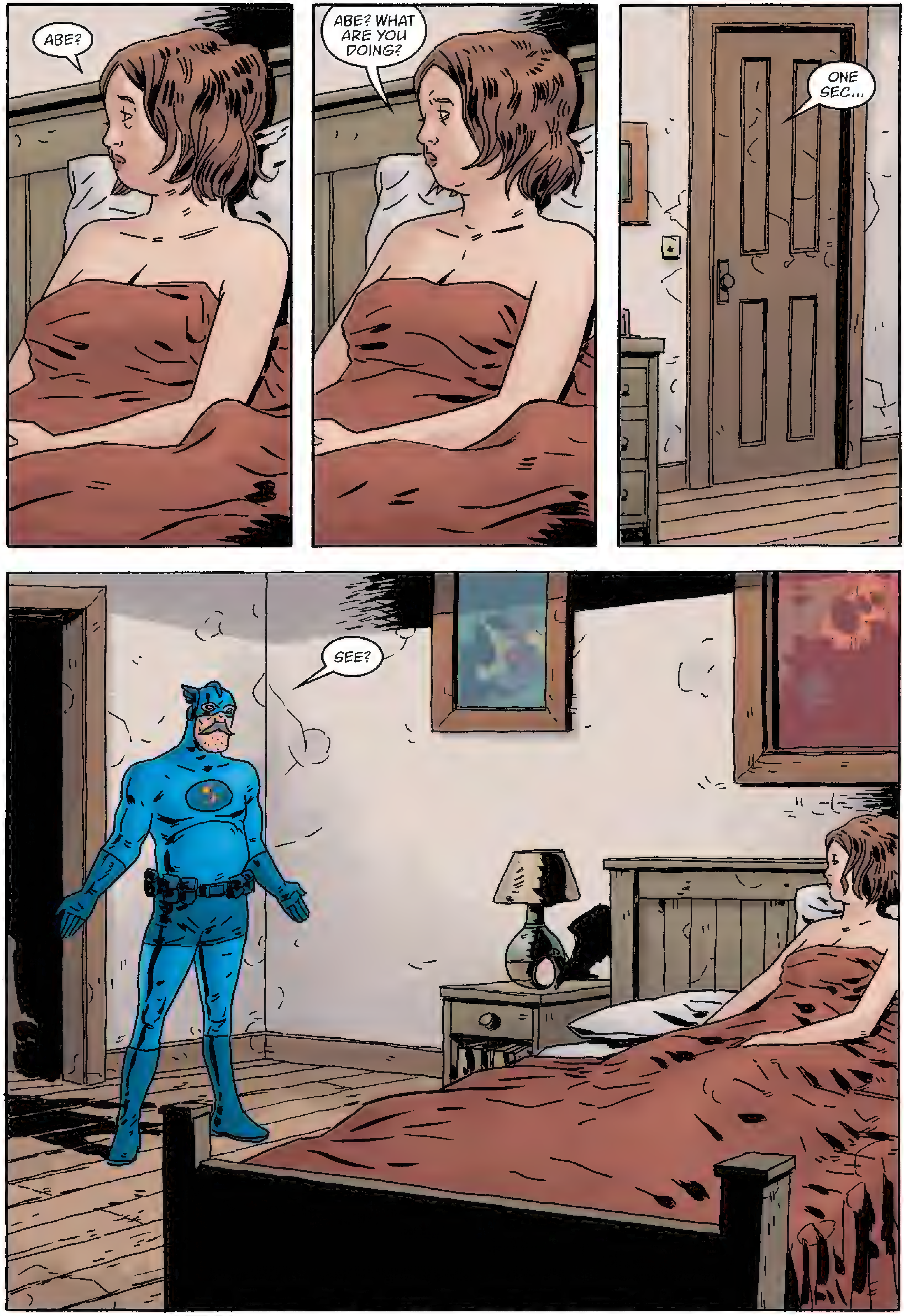
IT'S OVER, DRAGONFLY.
ALL THE DECEPTION. ALL THE LIES. YOU TWO HAD TO KNOW IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL IT ALL COLLAPSED.
DON'T PAINT US AS VILLAINS, LUCY. YOU'RE A SMART GIRL. YOU KNOW THIS IS ALL MUCH MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT.
YOU'VE DESTROYED THEIR LIVES. ABE, GAIL...HOW COULD YOU DO THAT?! THEY ARE YOUR FRIENDS.
THIS GOES BEYOND THAT. IT GOES BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL. IT GOES BEYOND FRIENDSHIP.

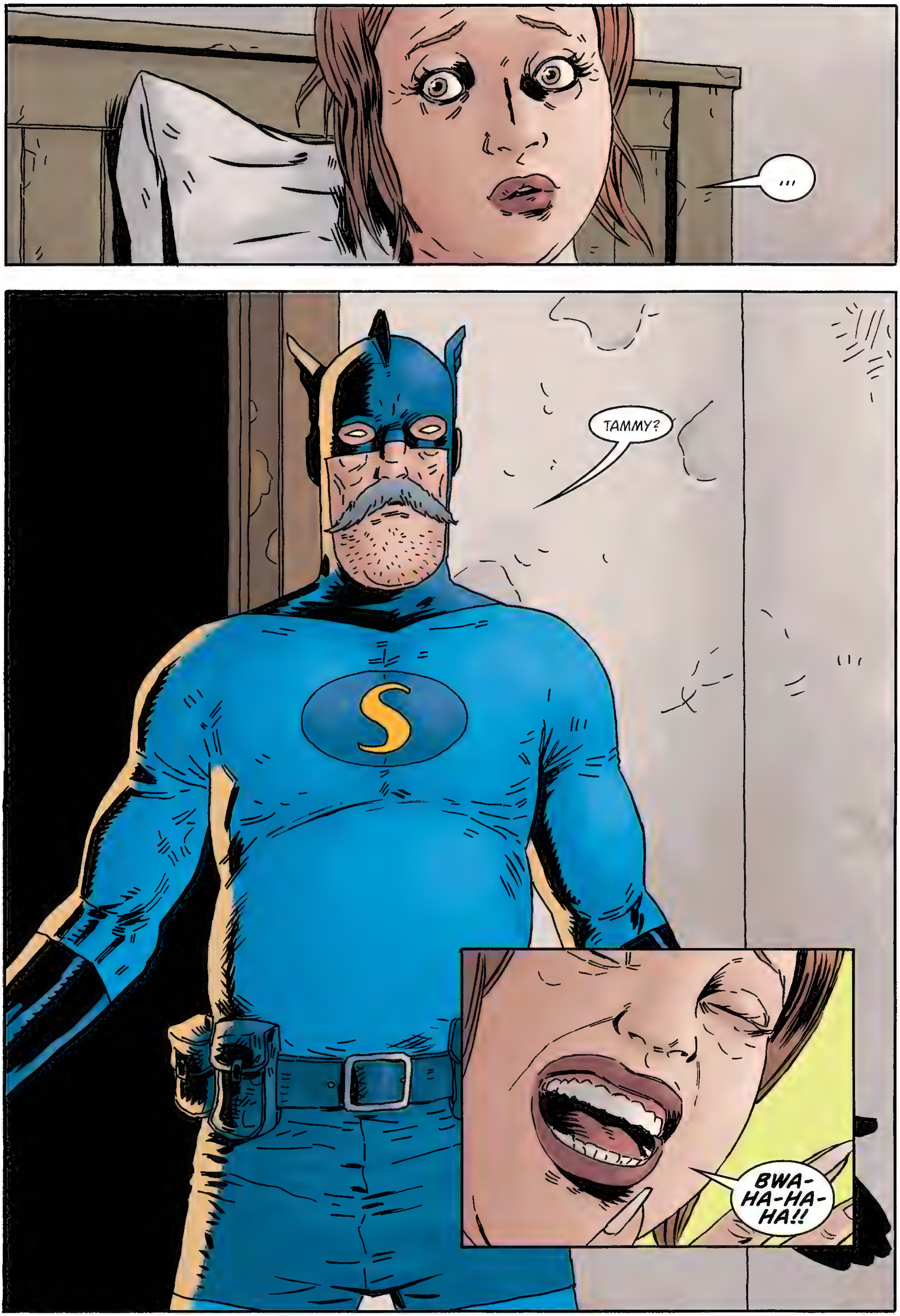
I AM SORRY, LUCY. I TRULY AM. BUT I HAVE LEARNED TO LIVE WITH GUILT. AND I AM WILLING TO ***KILL YOU*** IF THAT IS WHAT IT TAKES TO KEEP ***EVERYONE ELSE*** ALIVE.
No...I have seen what comes next, Madame... and it is worse than death.

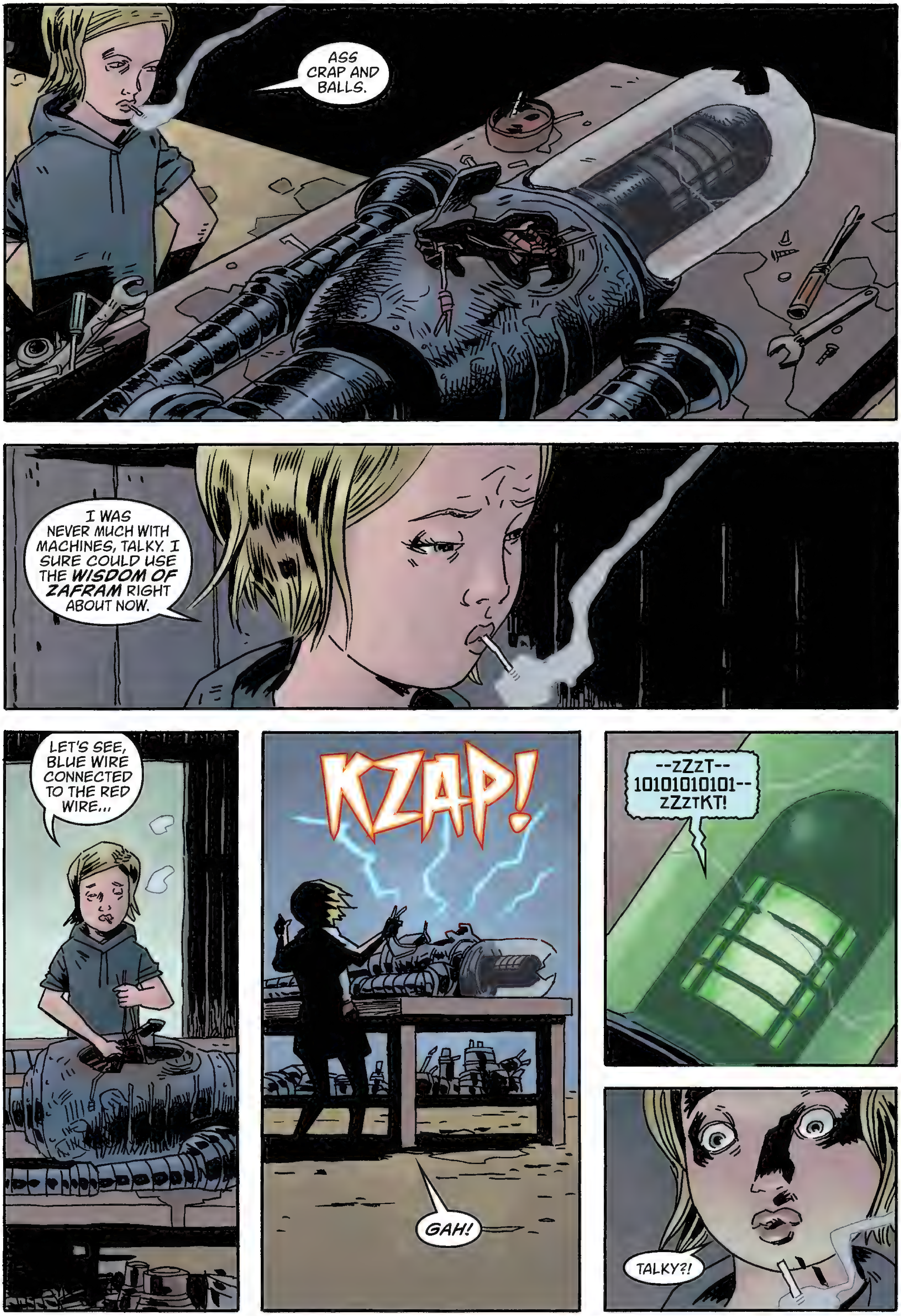
SO...I GUESS THIS MEANS WE'RE GOING STEADY AGAIN?
DON'T GET AHEAD OF YOURSELF, OLD MAN. YOU STILL GOT SOME WORK TO DO.
I FEEL UP TO THE JOB.
BUT REALLY, ABE. WHAT THE HELL DO YOU MAKE OF EARL?
I CAN'T FIGURE IT. BUT I GUESS IT IS WHAT IT IS. HE HAD SOME KIND OF CHANGE OF HEART.
THAT WAS NOT EARL, ABE. I MEAN, I'VE KNOWN THAT MAN FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS. THIS WHOLE THING IS JUST SO...WEIRD.
YEAH...
ABE. YOU'RE GETTING THAT LOOK AGAIN.
WHAT LOOK?
THAT LOOK YOU GET WHEN YOU PULL AWAY. THAT LOOK YOU GET WHEN YOU'RE NOT TELLING ME EVERYTHING.

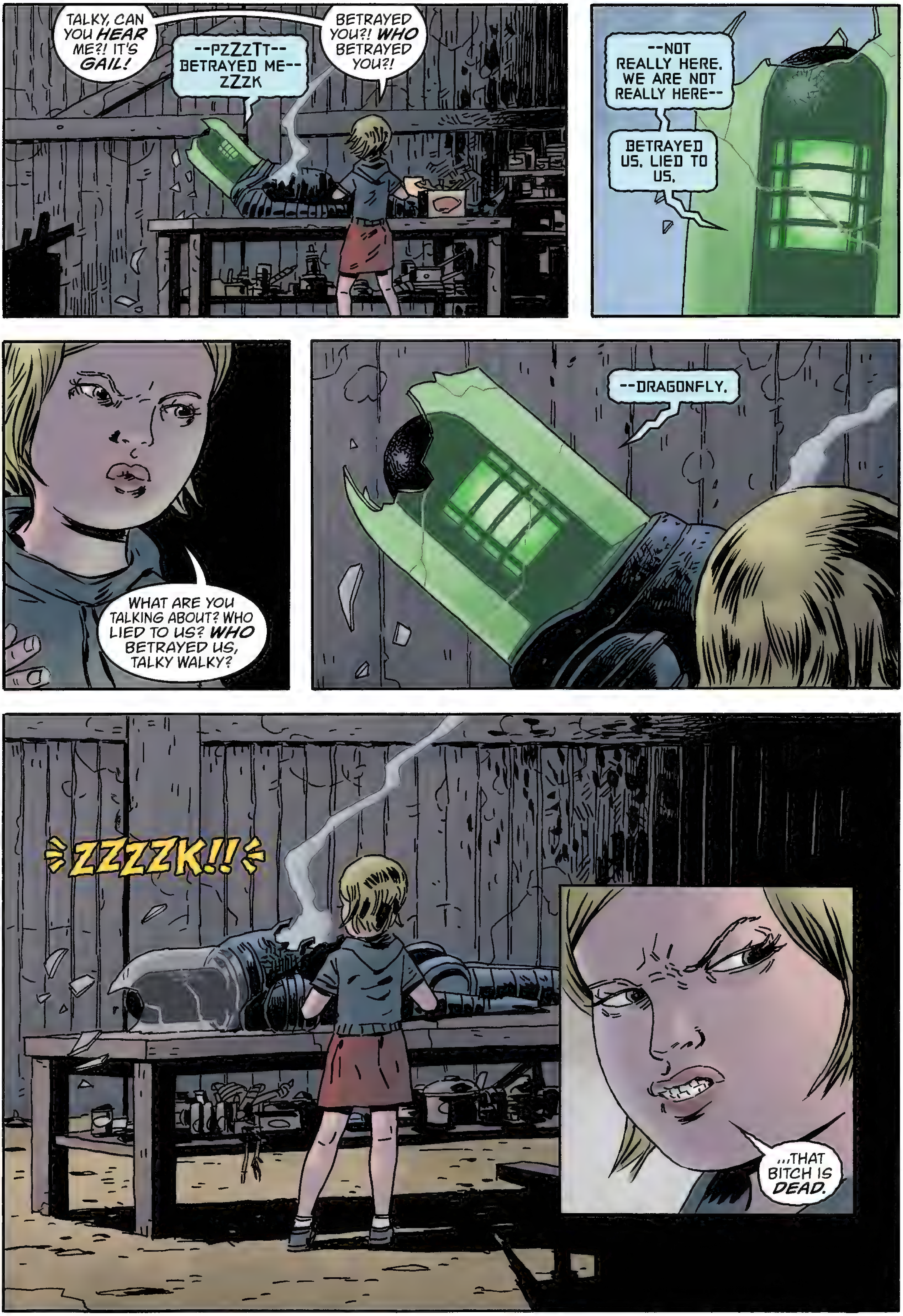

LOOK, ABE. THE REAL REASON I PULLED AWAY FROM YOU WASN'T JUST EARL. IT WAS BECAUSE THERE'S A *PART* OF YOUR LIFE YOU ARE CONSTANTLY KEEPING FROM ME. IF THIS IS GOING TO WORK...
I KNOW.
SO?
OKAY. OKAY. LISTEN. I AM--I'M GONNA TELL YOU EVERYTHING, TAMMY. BUT I WARN YOU--IT'S *A LOT* TO HANDLE.
I'M A BIG GIRL, ABE.
THE REASON THINGS SEEM WEIRD ALL THE TIME IS BECAUSE THEY ARE. THE REASON YOU FEEL I'M KEEPING SOMETHING FROM YOU IS BECAUSE *I AM.*
MY FAMILY, WELL, THEY ARE NOT REALLY MY FAMILY.
...
WHAT *THE HELL* ARE YOU SAYING?

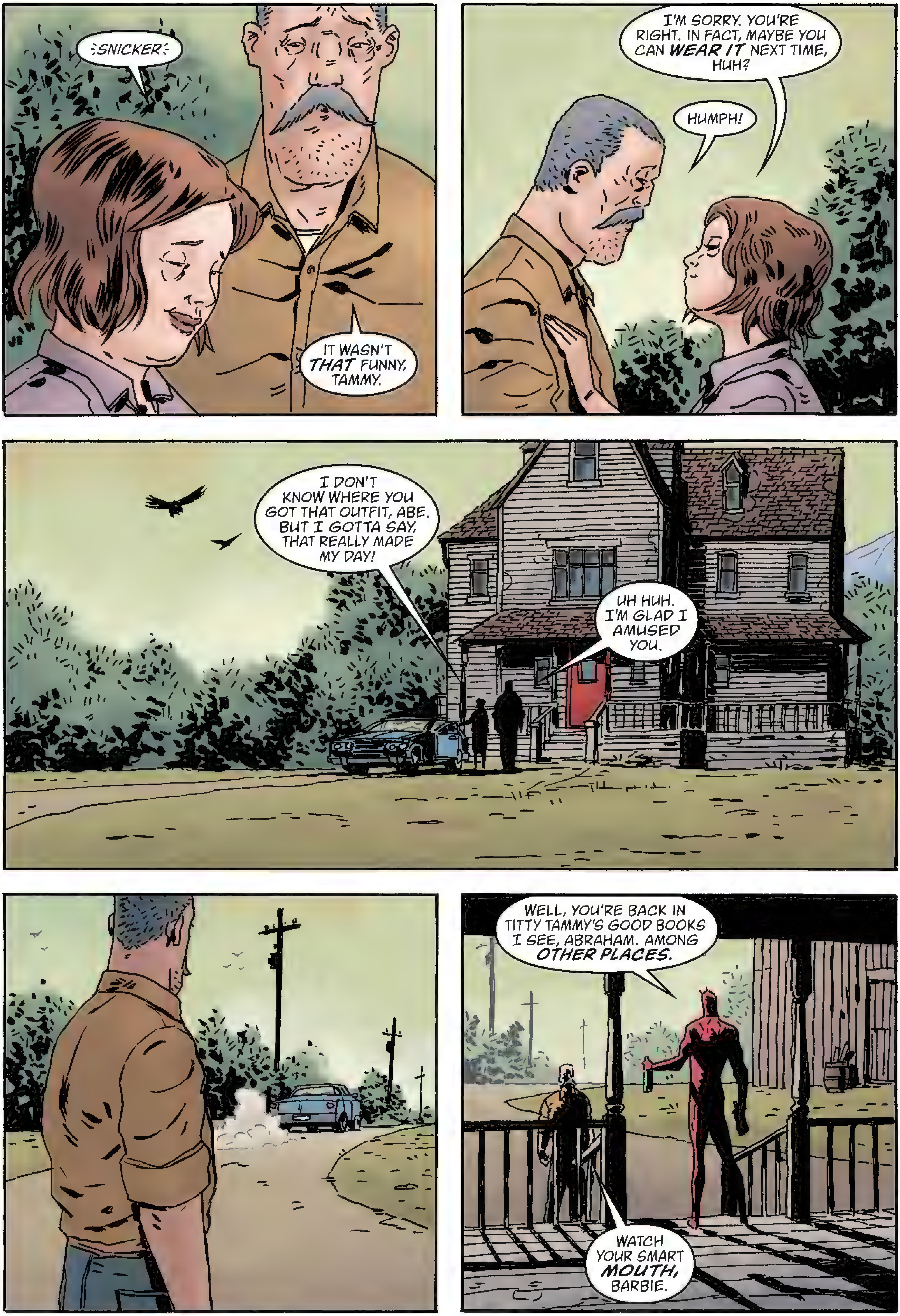

WE CAME FROM SOMEWHERE *FAR* AWAY FROM HERE. A PLACE CALLED SPIRAL CITY.
GAIL ISN'T REALLY MY GRANDDAUGHTER. MARK, WELL, HE'S NOT EVEN *REALLY MARK,* LET ALONE MY SON.
WE'RE *SUPERHEROES,* TAMMY. ALL OF US. WE'RE REAL LIFE SUPERHEROES.
...
I KNOW, I KNOW. IT SOUNDS INSANE. I GET THAT. WHICH IS WHY I DIDN'T TELL YOU IN THE FIRST PLACE BUT--
HOLD ON. MAYBE IT'S BETTER IF I JUST *SHOW YOU.*

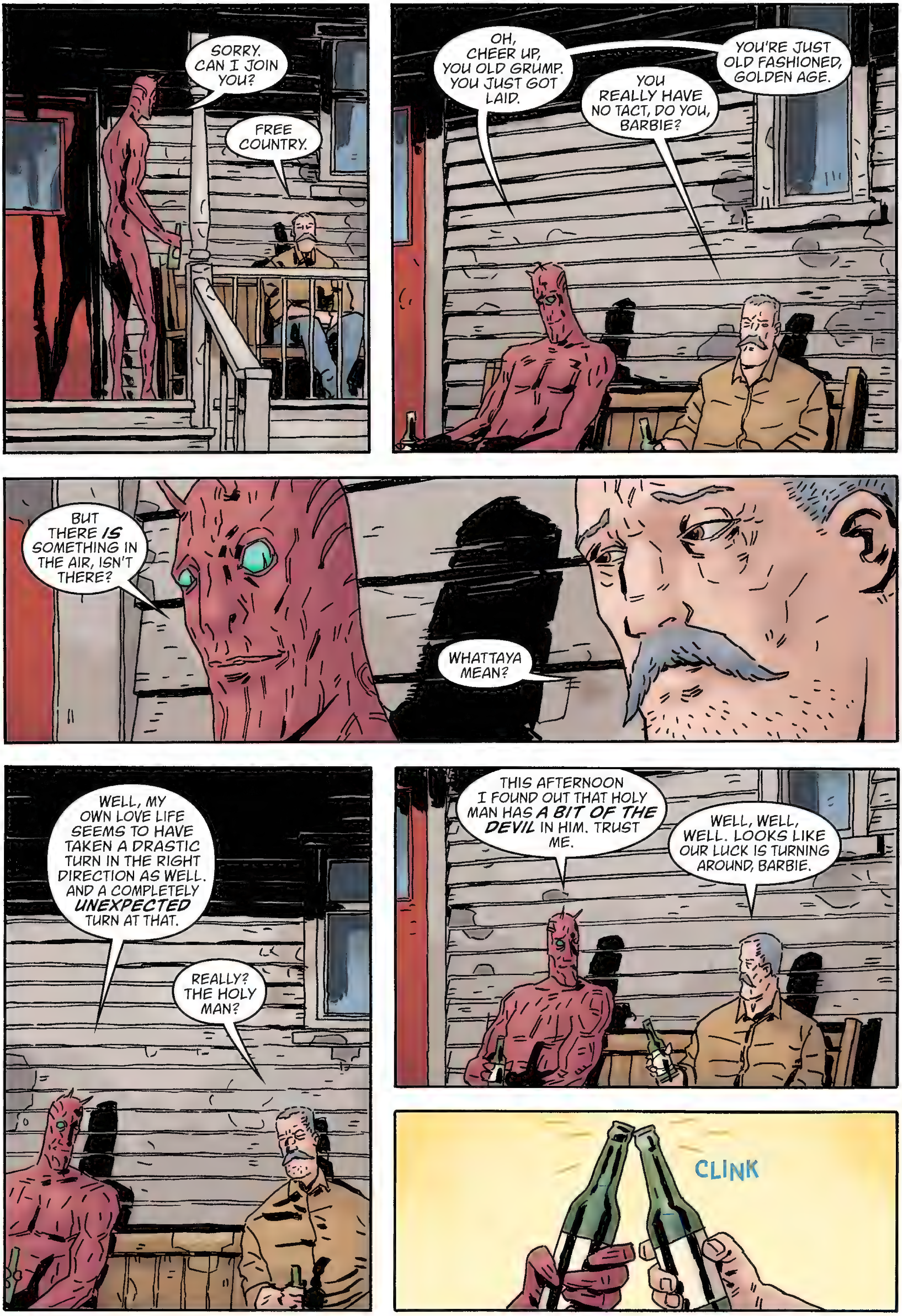

ABE?
ABE? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
ONE SEC...
SEE?

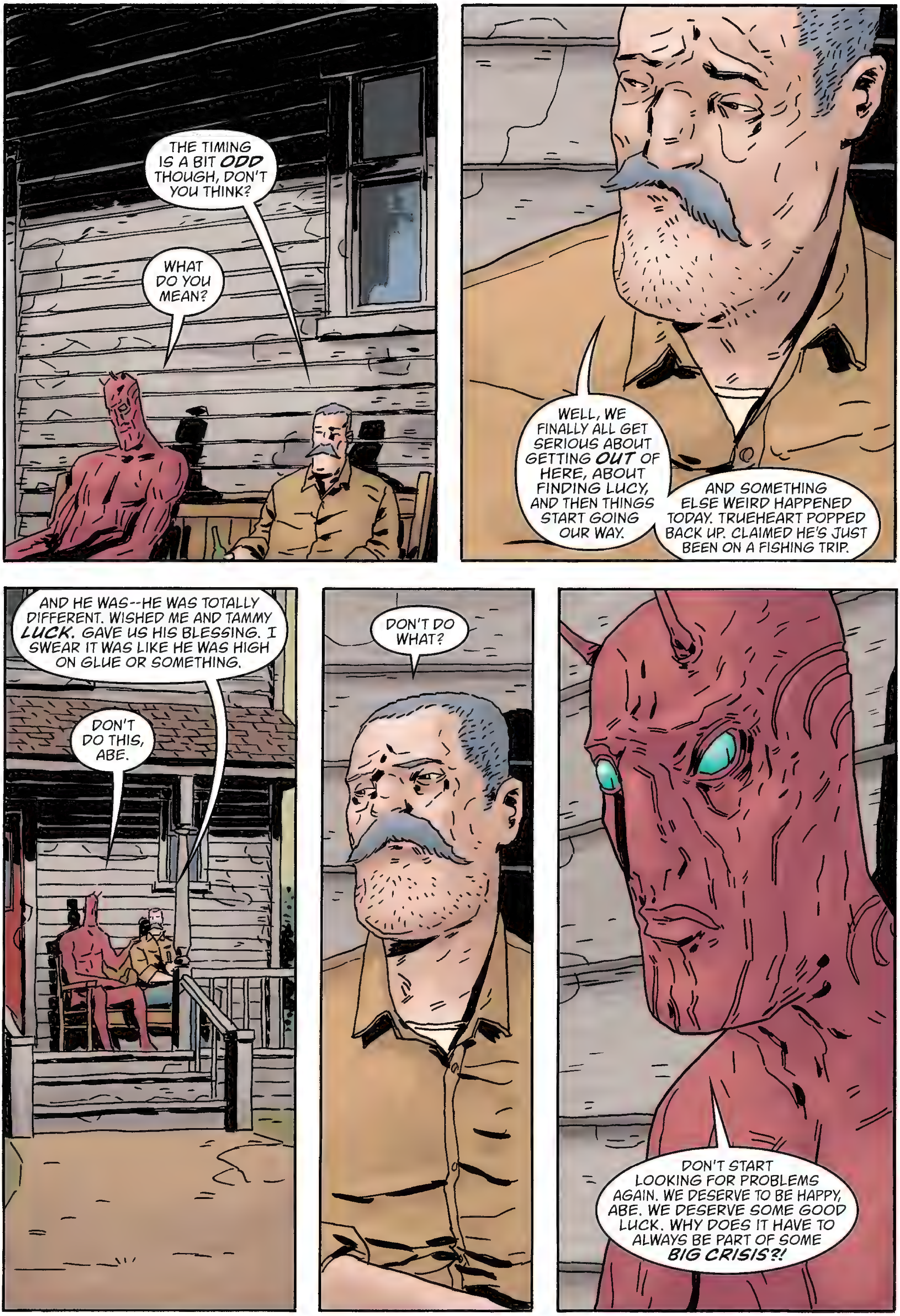

...
TAMMY?
BWA-HA-HA-HA!!

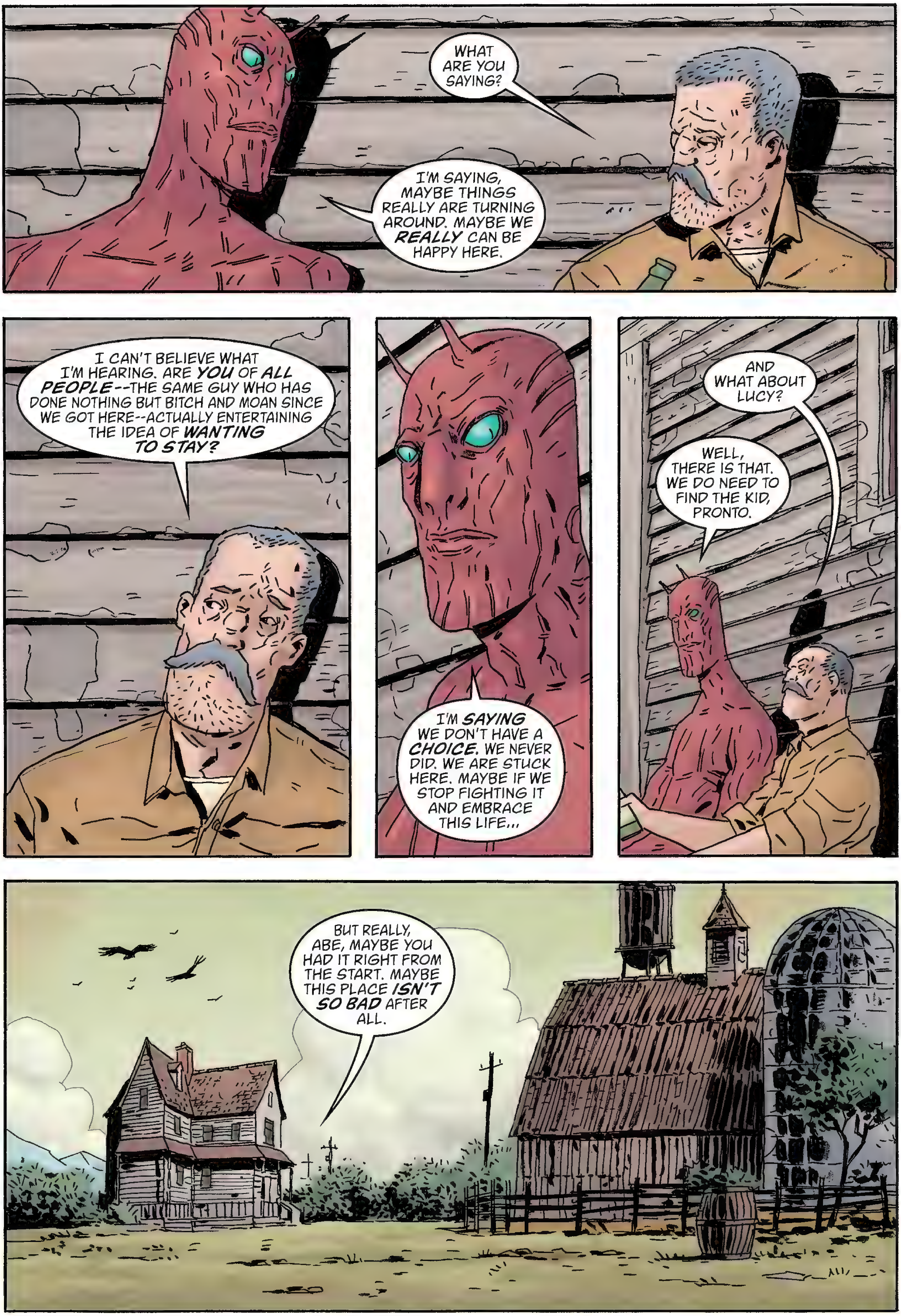

ASS CRAP AND BALLS.
I WAS NEVER MUCH WITH MACHINES, TALKY. I SURE COULD USE THE **WISDOM OF ZAFRAM** RIGHT ABOUT NOW.
LET'S SEE, BLUE WIRE CONNECTED TO THE RED WIRE...
KZAP!
GAH!
--zZzT-- 10101010101-- zZzTKT!
TALKY?!


TALKY, CAN YOU **HEAR** ME?! IT'S **GAIL!**
--PZZZTT-- BETRAYED ME-- ZZZK
BETRAYED YOU?! **WHO** BETRAYED YOU?!
--NOT REALLY HERE. WE ARE NOT REALLY HERE--
BETRAYED US. LIED TO US.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHO LIED TO US? **WHO** BETRAYED US, TALKY WALKY?
--DRAGONFLY.
ZZZZK!!
...THAT BITCH IS **DEAD.**

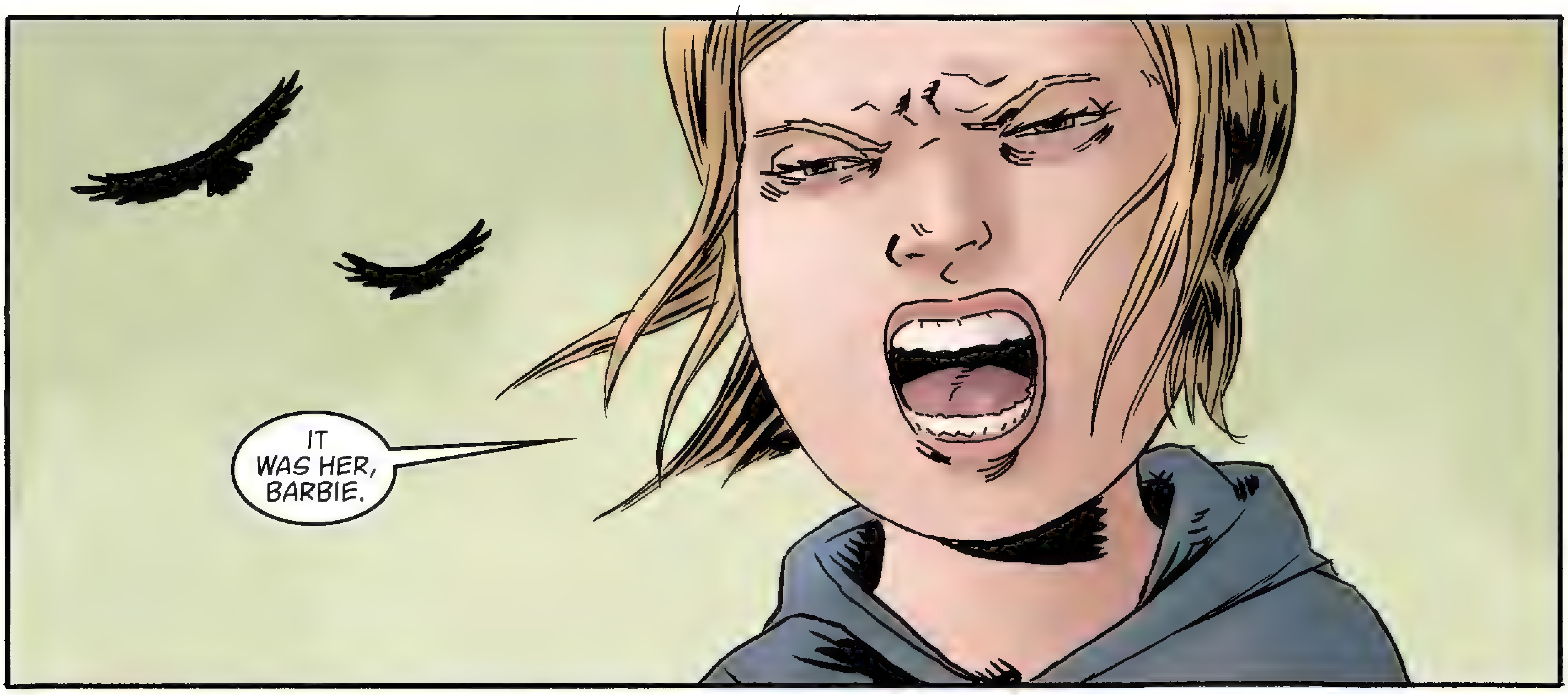

SNICKER
IT WASN'T *THAT* FUNNY, TAMMY.
I'M SORRY. YOU'RE RIGHT. IN FACT, MAYBE YOU CAN *WEAR IT* NEXT TIME, HUH?
HUMPH!
I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU GOT THAT OUTFIT, ABE. BUT I GOTTA SAY, THAT REALLY MADE MY DAY!
UH HUH. I'M GLAD I AMUSED YOU.
WELL, YOU'RE BACK IN TITTY TAMMY'S GOOD BOOKS I SEE, ABRAHAM. AMONG *OTHER PLACES.*
WATCH YOUR SMART *MOUTH,* BARBIE.

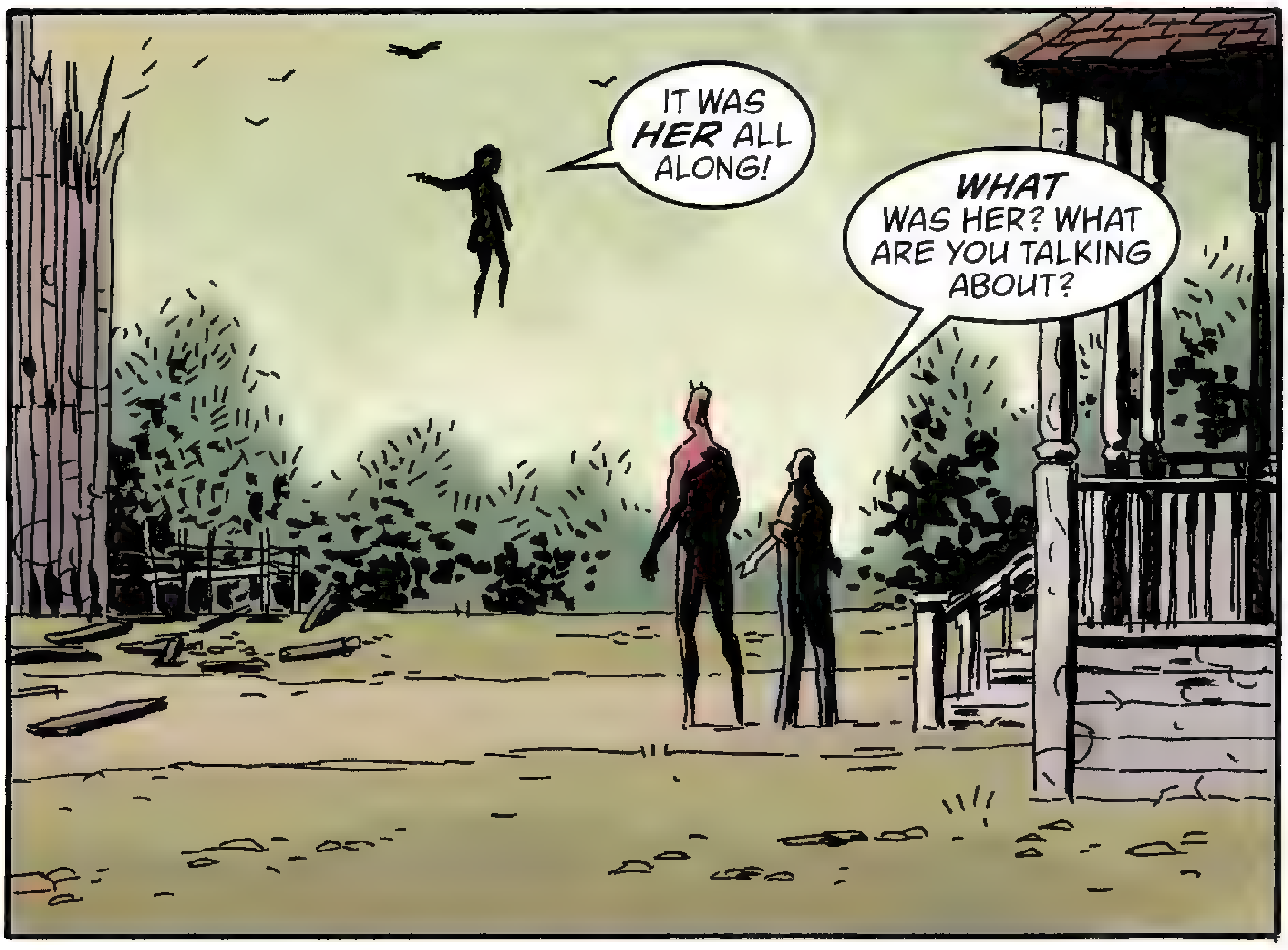

SORRY. CAN I JOIN YOU?
FREE COUNTRY.
OH, CHEER UP, YOU OLD GRUMP. YOU JUST GOT LAID.
YOU'RE JUST OLD FASHIONED, GOLDEN AGE.
YOU REALLY HAVE NO TACT, DO YOU, BARBIE?
BUT THERE *IS* SOMETHING IN THE AIR, ISN'T THERE?
WHATTAYA MEAN?
WELL, MY OWN LOVE LIFE SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN A DRASTIC TURN IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AS WELL. AND A COMPLETELY ***UNEXPECTED*** TURN AT THAT.
REALLY? THE HOLY MAN?
THIS AFTERNOON I FOUND OUT THAT HOLY MAN HAS ***A BIT OF THE DEVIL*** IN HIM. TRUST ME.
WELL, WELL, WELL. LOOKS LIKE OUR LUCK IS TURNING AROUND, BARBIE.
CLINK

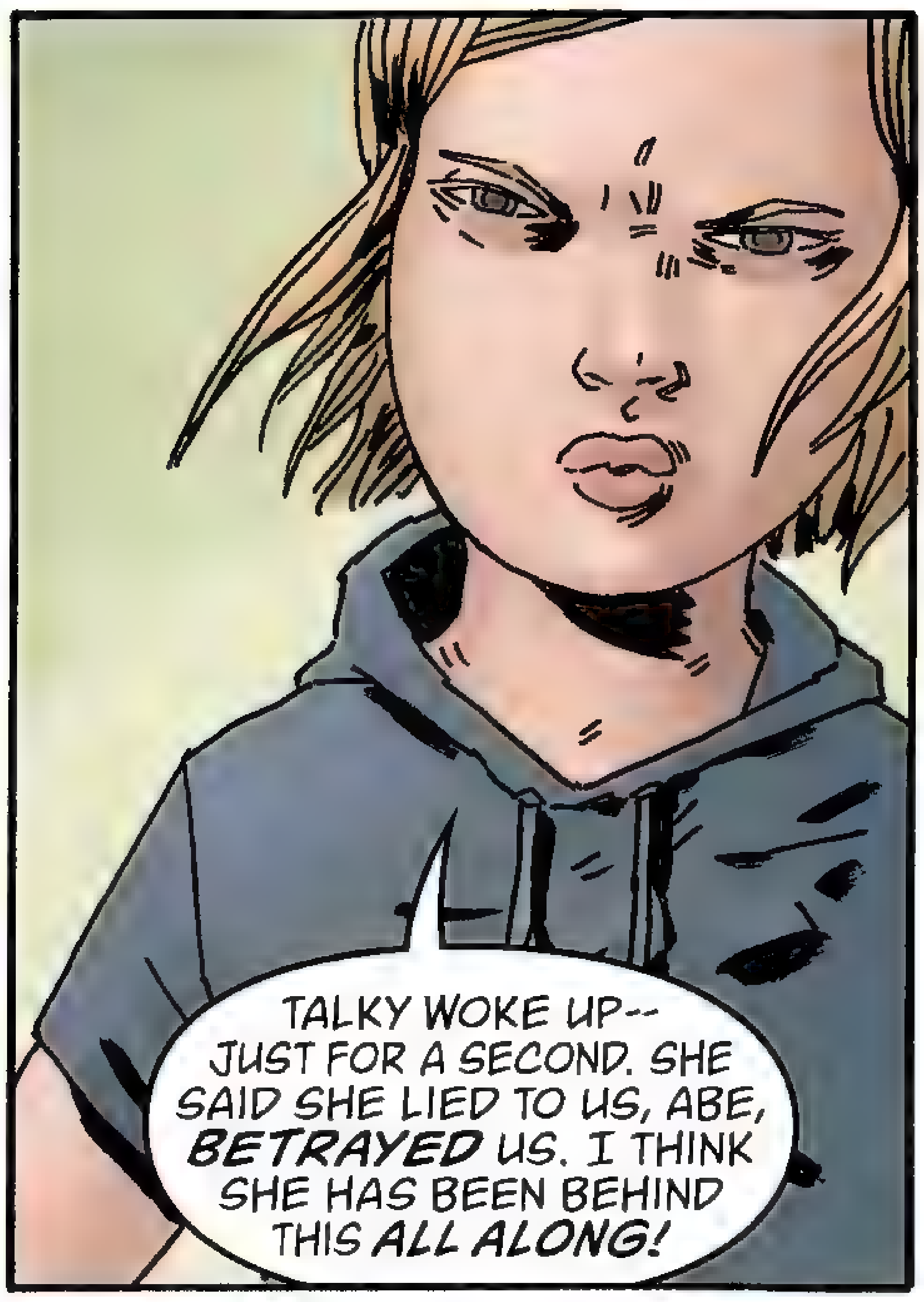

THE TIMING IS A BIT *ODD* THOUGH, DON'T YOU THINK?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WELL, WE FINALLY ALL GET SERIOUS ABOUT GETTING *OUT* OF HERE, ABOUT FINDING LUCY, AND THEN THINGS START GOING OUR WAY.
AND SOMETHING ELSE WEIRD HAPPENED TODAY. TRUEHEART POPPED BACK UP. CLAIMED HE'S JUST BEEN ON A FISHING TRIP.
AND HE WAS--HE WAS TOTALLY DIFFERENT. WISHED ME AND TAMMY *LUCK*. GAVE US HIS BLESSING. I SWEAR IT WAS LIKE HE WAS HIGH ON GLUE OR SOMETHING.
DON'T DO THIS, ABE.
DON'T DO WHAT?
DON'T START LOOKING FOR PROBLEMS AGAIN. WE DESERVE TO BE HAPPY, ABE. WE DESERVE SOME GOOD LUCK. WHY DOES IT HAVE TO ALWAYS BE PART OF SOME *BIG CRISIS?!*

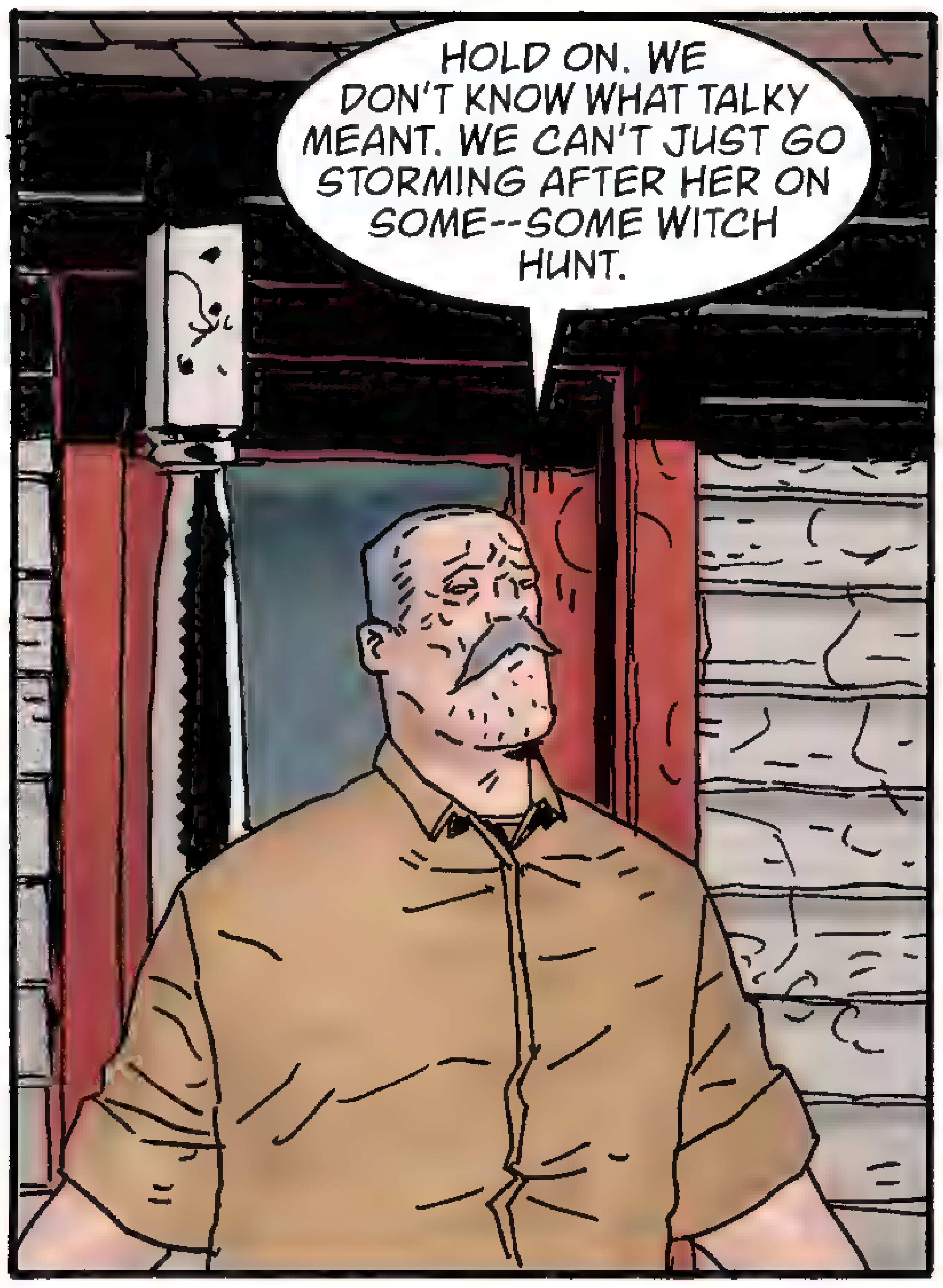

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
I'M SAYING, MAYBE THINGS REALLY ARE TURNING AROUND. MAYBE WE ***REALLY*** CAN BE HAPPY HERE.
I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT I'M HEARING. ARE ***YOU*** OF ***ALL PEOPLE***--THE SAME GUY WHO HAS DONE NOTHING BUT BITCH AND MOAN SINCE WE GOT HERE--ACTUALLY ENTERTAINING THE IDEA OF ***WANTING TO STAY?***
I'M ***SAYING*** WE DON'T HAVE A ***CHOICE.*** WE NEVER DID. WE ARE STUCK HERE. MAYBE IF WE STOP FIGHTING IT AND EMBRACE THIS LIFE...
AND WHAT ABOUT LUCY?
WELL, THERE IS THAT. WE DO NEED TO FIND THE KID, PRONTO.
BUT REALLY, ABE, MAYBE YOU HAD IT RIGHT FROM THE START. MAYBE THIS PLACE ***ISN'T SO BAD*** AFTER ALL.

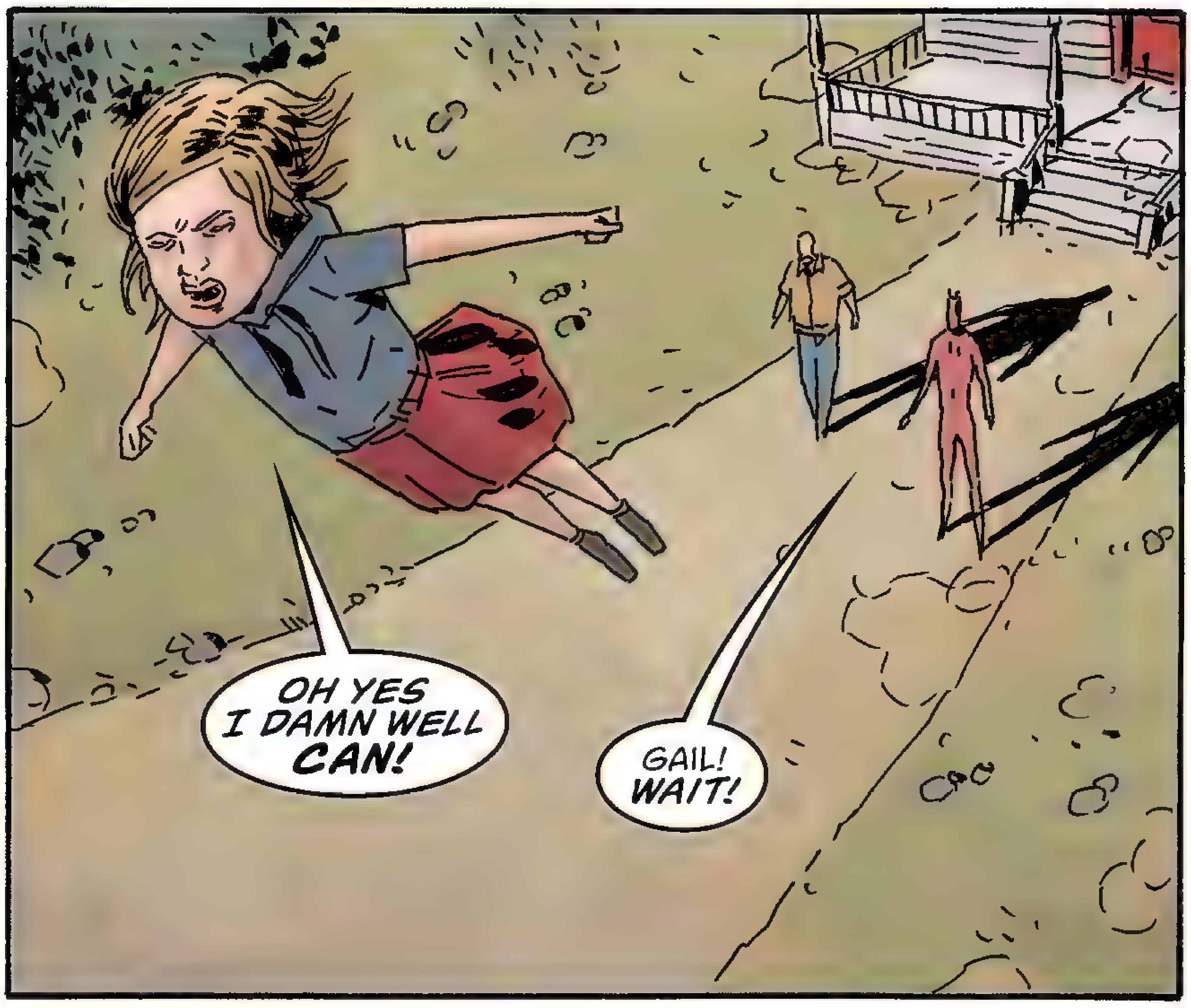
BOOM!
GAH!
THAT FUCKING BITCH!!
JEEZUS, GAIL! YOU NEARLY GAVE ME A DAMNED CORONARY!
AND WHAT ABOUT MY BARN?!
...DRAGONFLY.
WHOA, WHOA... CALM DOWN. BREATHE. JUST TELL US WHAT HAPPENED.

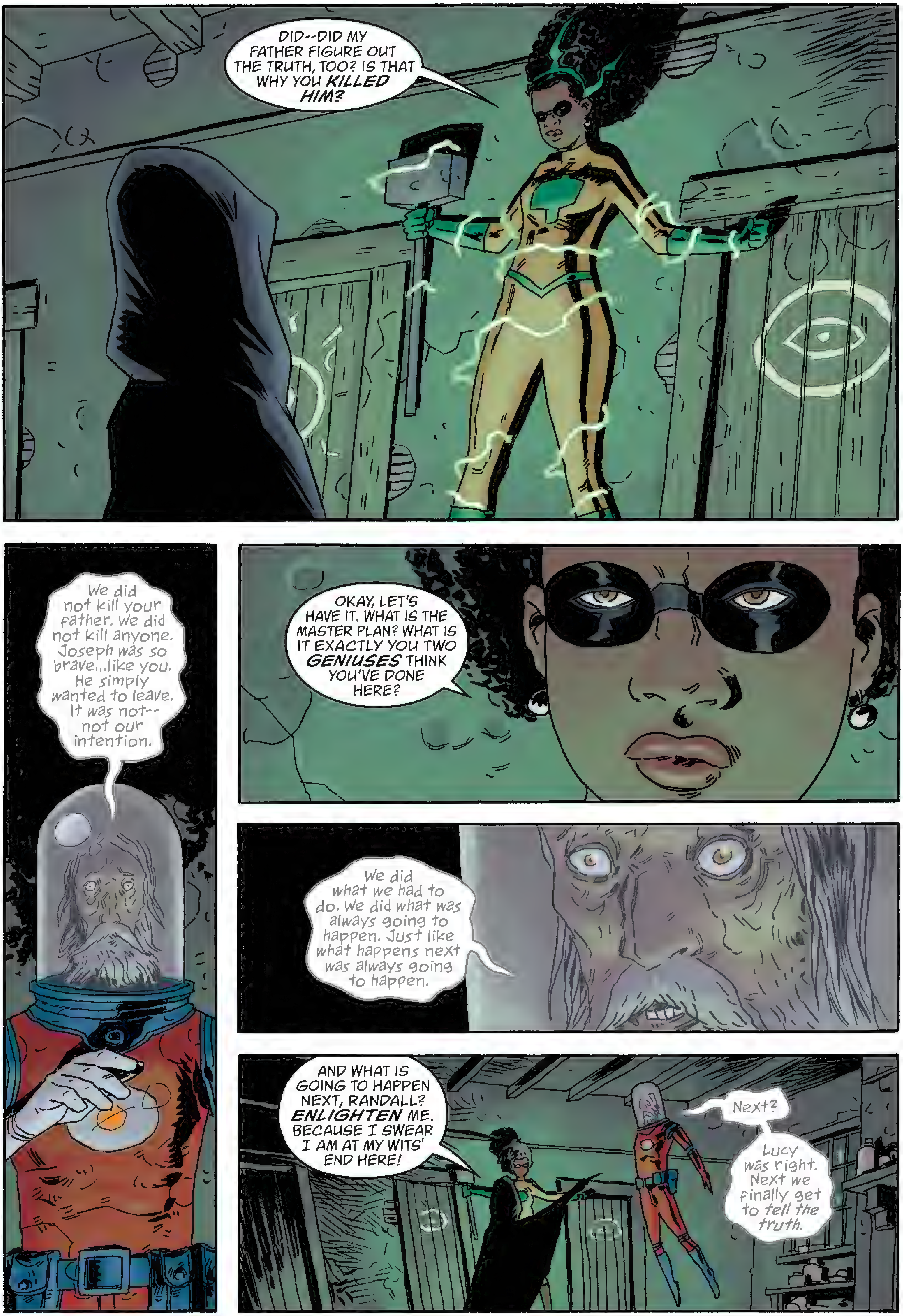

IT WAS HER, BARBIE.

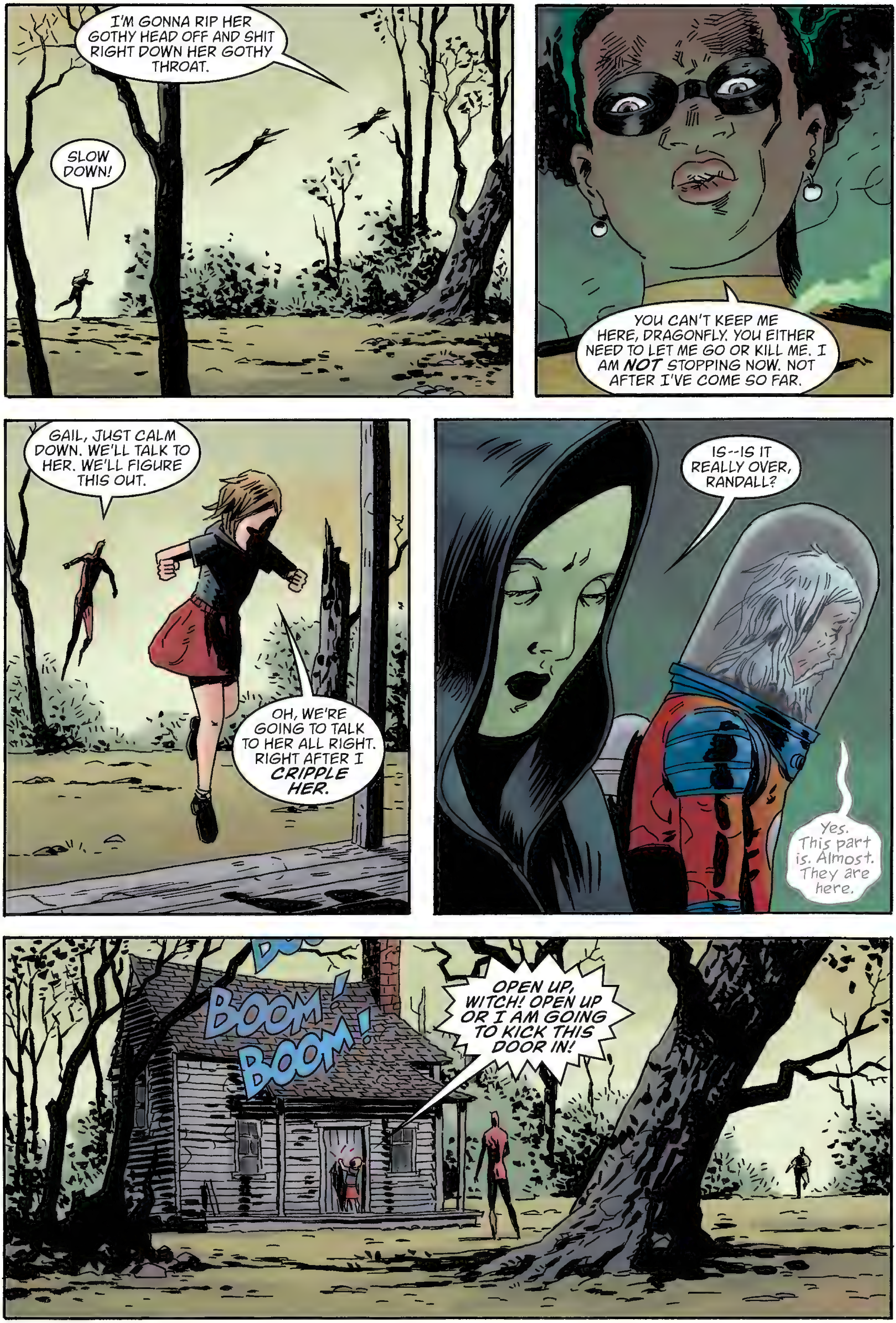

IT WAS **HER** ALL ALONG!
WHAT WAS HER? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?


TALKY WOKE UP-- JUST FOR A SECOND. SHE SAID SHE LIED TO US, ABE, **BETRAYED** US. I THINK SHE HAS BEEN BEHIND THIS **ALL ALONG!**

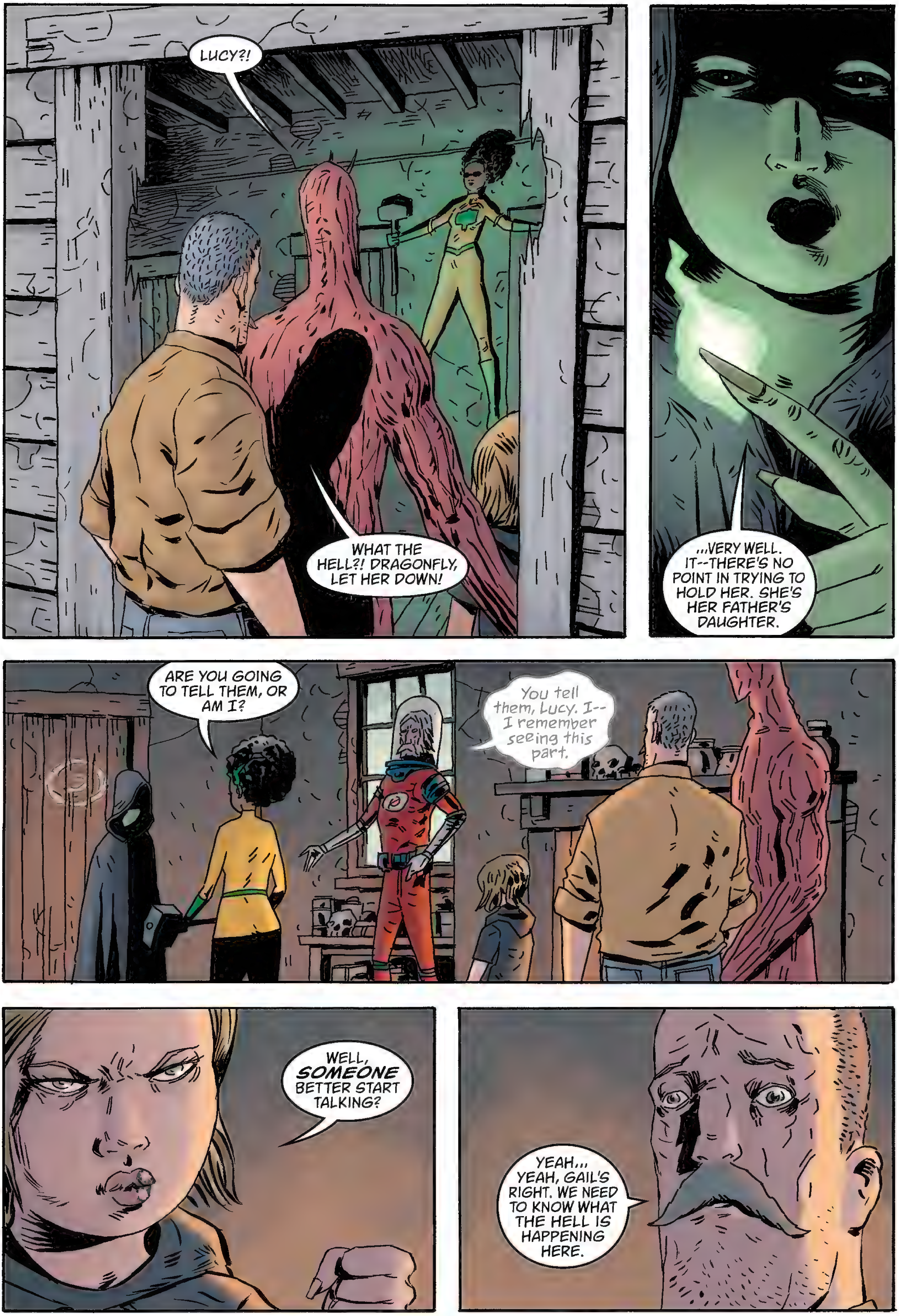

HOLD ON. WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TALKY MEANT. WE CAN'T JUST GO STORMING AFTER HER ON SOME--SOME WITCH HUNT.

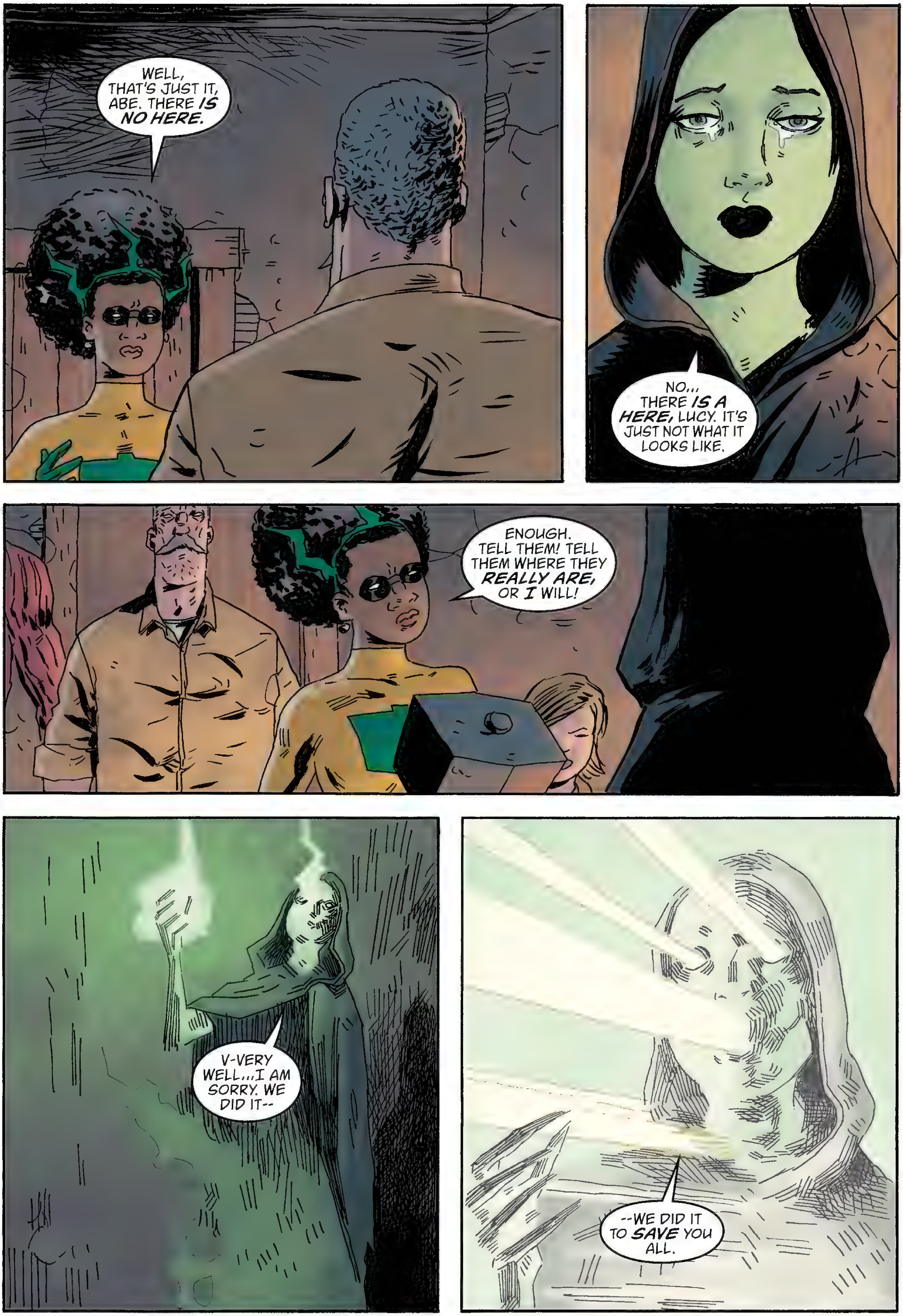

OH YES I DAMN WELL **CAN!**
GAIL! **WAIT!**


DID--DID MY FATHER FIGURE OUT THE TRUTH, TOO? IS THAT WHY YOU ***KILLED HIM?***
We did not kill your father. We did not kill anyone. Joseph was so brave...like you. He simply wanted to leave. It was not--not our intention.
OKAY, LET'S HAVE IT. WHAT IS THE MASTER PLAN? WHAT IS IT EXACTLY YOU TWO ***GENIUSES*** THINK YOU'VE DONE HERE?
We did what we had to do. We did what was always going to happen. Just like what happens next was always going to happen.
AND WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT, RANDALL? ***ENLIGHTEN*** ME. BECAUSE I SWEAR I AM AT MY WITS' END HERE!
Next?
Lucy was right. Next we finally get to *tell the truth.*


I'M GONNA RIP HER GOTHY HEAD OFF AND SHIT RIGHT DOWN HER GOTHY THROAT.
SLOW DOWN!
YOU CAN'T KEEP ME HERE, DRAGONFLY. YOU EITHER NEED TO LET ME GO OR KILL ME. I AM **NOT** STOPPING NOW. NOT AFTER I'VE COME SO FAR.
GAIL, JUST CALM DOWN. WE'LL TALK TO HER. WE'LL FIGURE THIS OUT.
OH, WE'RE GOING TO TALK TO HER ALL RIGHT. RIGHT AFTER I **CRIPPLE HER.**
IS--IS IT REALLY OVER, RANDALL?
Yes. This part is. Almost. They are here.
BOOM! BOOM!
OPEN UP, WITCH! OPEN UP OR I AM GOING TO KICK THIS DOOR IN!

OPEN UP!
BOOM
IN A WAY--IN A WAY I'M GLAD.
I'M GLAD IT'S OVER. I'M TIRED...
WHAM
I'M TIRED OF *HOLDING IT ALL TOGETHER.*

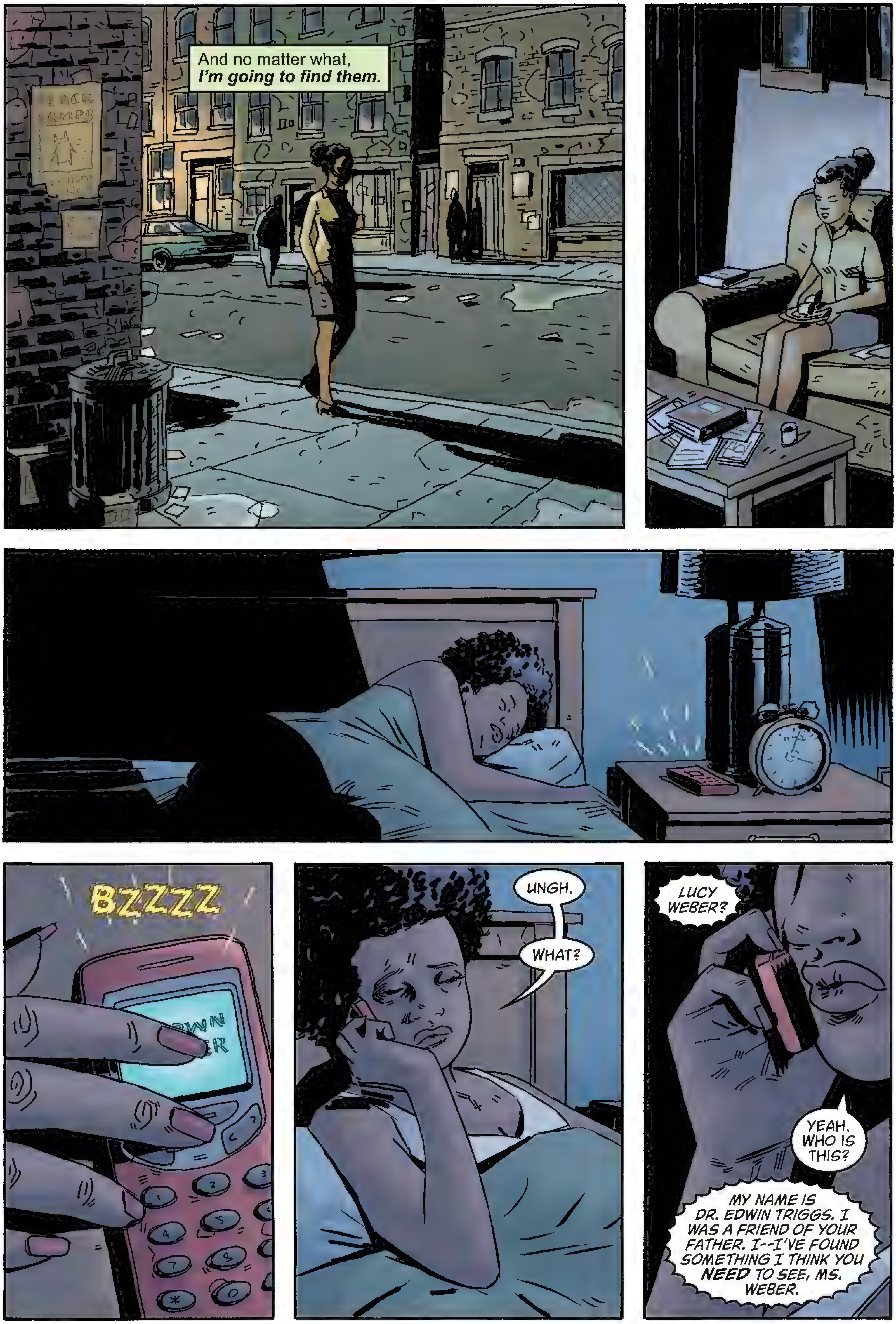

LUCY?!
WHAT THE HELL?! DRAGONFLY, LET HER DOWN!
...VERY WELL. IT--THERE'S NO POINT IN TRYING TO HOLD HER. SHE'S HER FATHER'S DAUGHTER.
ARE YOU GOING TO TELL THEM, OR AM I?
You tell them, Lucy. I-- I remember seeing this part.
WELL, *SOMEONE* BETTER START TALKING?
YEAH... YEAH, GAIL'S RIGHT. WE NEED TO KNOW WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPENING HERE.


WELL, THAT'S JUST IT, ABE. THERE *IS* *NO HERE.*
NO... THERE *IS A* *HERE,* LUCY. IT'S JUST NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.
ENOUGH. TELL THEM! TELL THEM WHERE THEY *REALLY ARE,* OR *I* WILL!
V-VERY WELL...I AM SORRY. WE DID IT--
--WE DID IT TO *SAVE* YOU ALL.

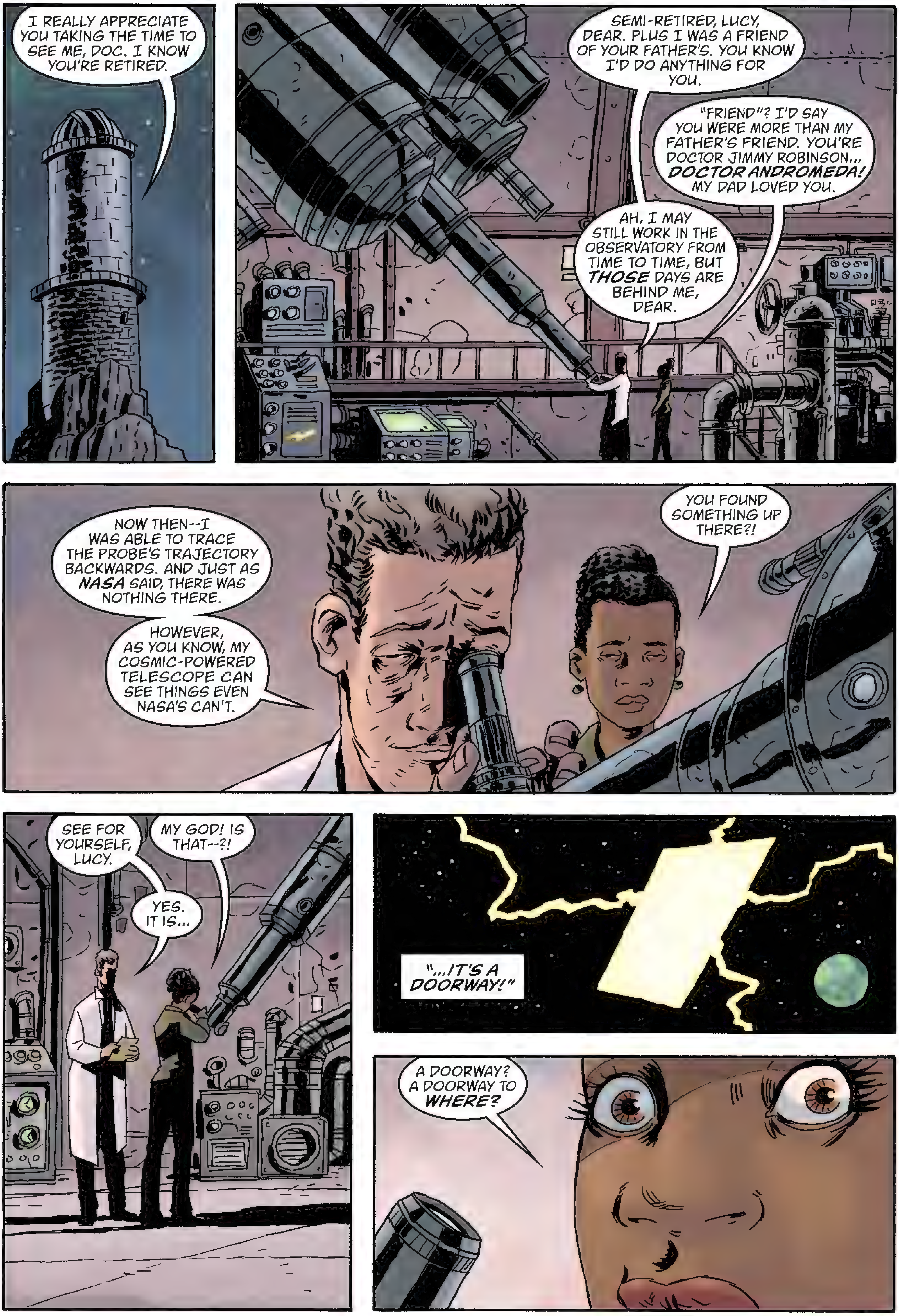
W-WHAT?!

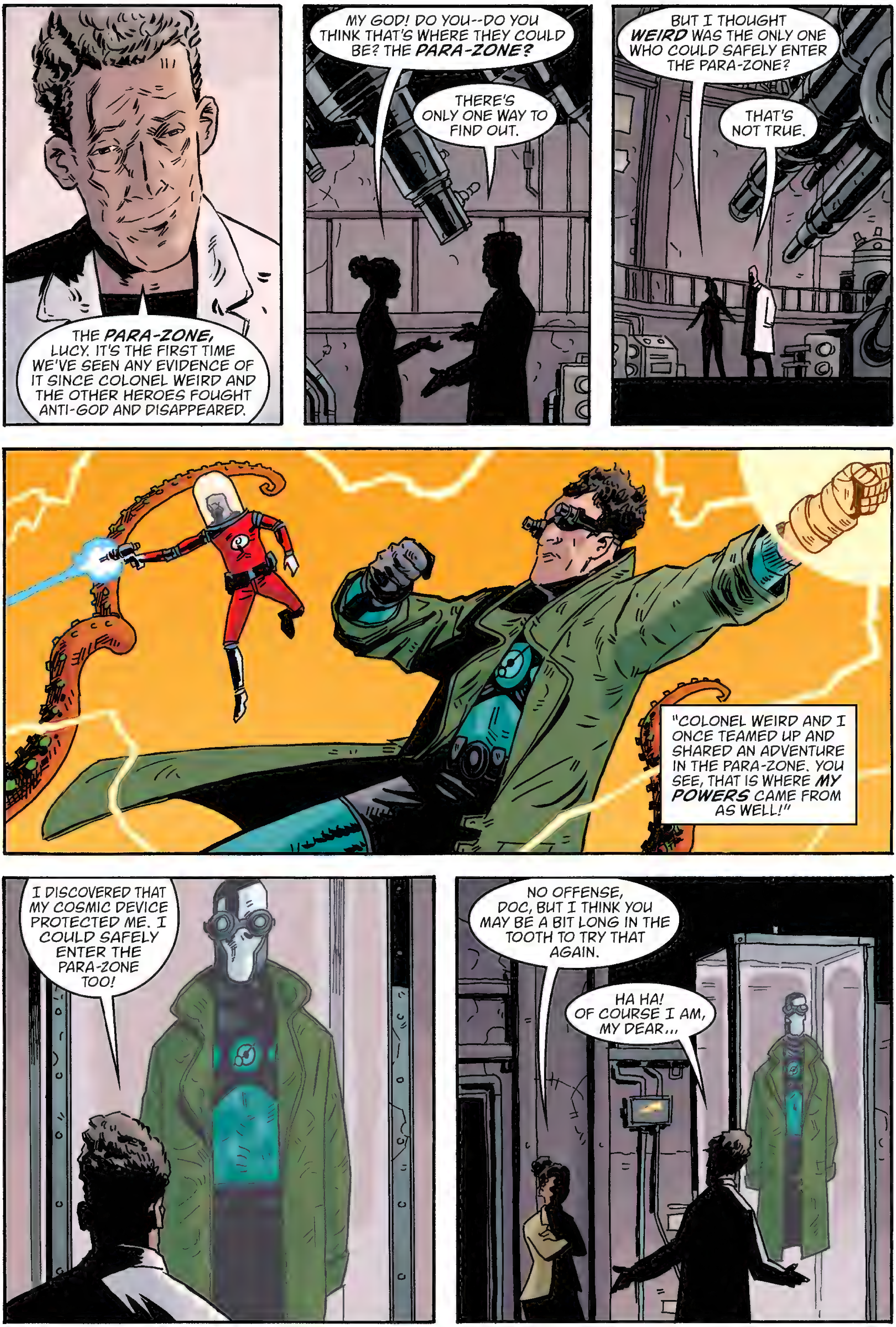
FG
after

Ten years…ten years ago today since they saved ***Spiral City*** and disappeared.
To most, they don't seem real anymore. Like urban legends…ghost stories.
But they ***were real.*** I know because ***I was there.*** I was only ten, but I remember the terror…the fear. It's still there, in the air. It infected the city and never left us.
They stopped him. They defeated Anti-God and saved us all. In the aftermath their bodies were never found. They were presumed to have been ***obliterated*** in the final battle.
They were the greatest heroes of a ***lost age…***
Abraham Slam, the original two-fisted crimebuster.
Golden Gail, America's super-powered sweetheart.
Barbalien, the warlord from Mars, and Colonel Weird, swashbuckling space hero…
GLOBAL PLANET
SPIRAL CITY'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER
ESTABLISHED 1902
HEROES KILLED SAVING SPIRAL CITY
Anti-God Destroyed
And my Dad…Joseph Weber…the ***Black Hammer.*** Hero of the streets.
There is ***no story*** I won't chase down. Not when ***I believe*** in it. And I tell you this, dear readers of Spiral City…***I believe more than anything*** that ***they are still alive.***
I believe that they're ***still out there*** somewhere…

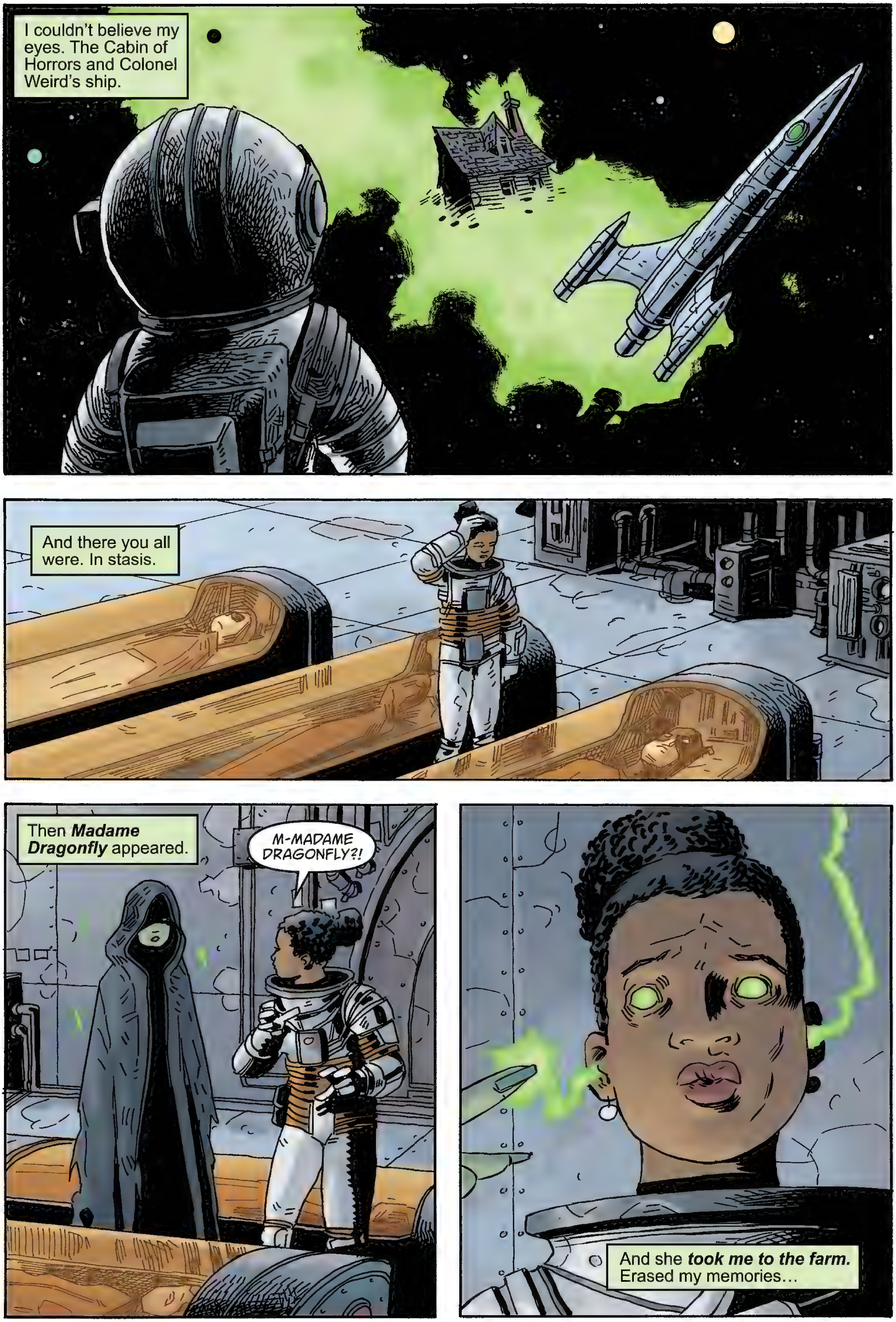

And no matter what,
I'm going to find them.
BZZZZ
UNGH.
WHAT?
LUCY WEBER?
YEAH. WHO IS THIS?
MY NAME IS DR. EDWIN TRIGGS. I WAS A FRIEND OF YOUR FATHER. I--I'VE FOUND SOMETHING I THINK YOU **NEED** TO SEE, MS. WEBER.

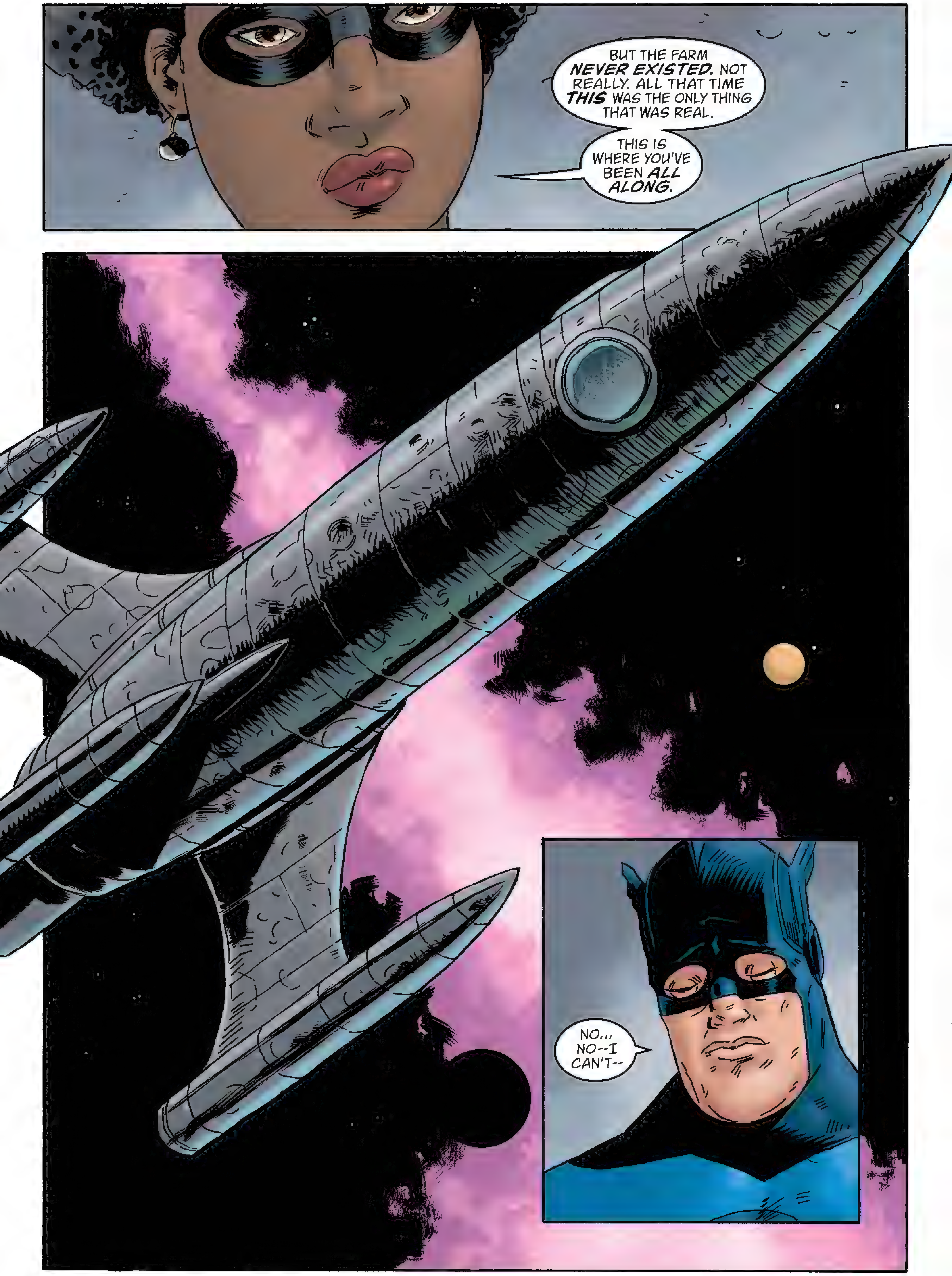
SUDAN.
DR. TRIGGS?
MS. WEBER. I'M SO GLAD YOU COULD COME ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE.
OF COURSE. IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE...THIS MAY BE SOMETHING I'VE BEEN AFTER FOR A *VERY* LONG TIME.
HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S AUTHENTIC?
IT IS. I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT MYSELF WHEN I SAW IT.
AS I SAID ON THE PHONE, IN MY YOUTH I WAS PART OF THE SCIENCE TEAM THAT HELPED DEVELOP EQUIPMENT FOR THE SUPERHUMAN COMMUNITY. SO I AM *CERTAIN,* MS. WEBER...
THIS DEFINITELY CAME FROM COLONEL WEIRD'S SHIP!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE IT *CAME FROM?*
NOT YET.
BUT THERE IS *ONE PERSON* WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO TELL US...

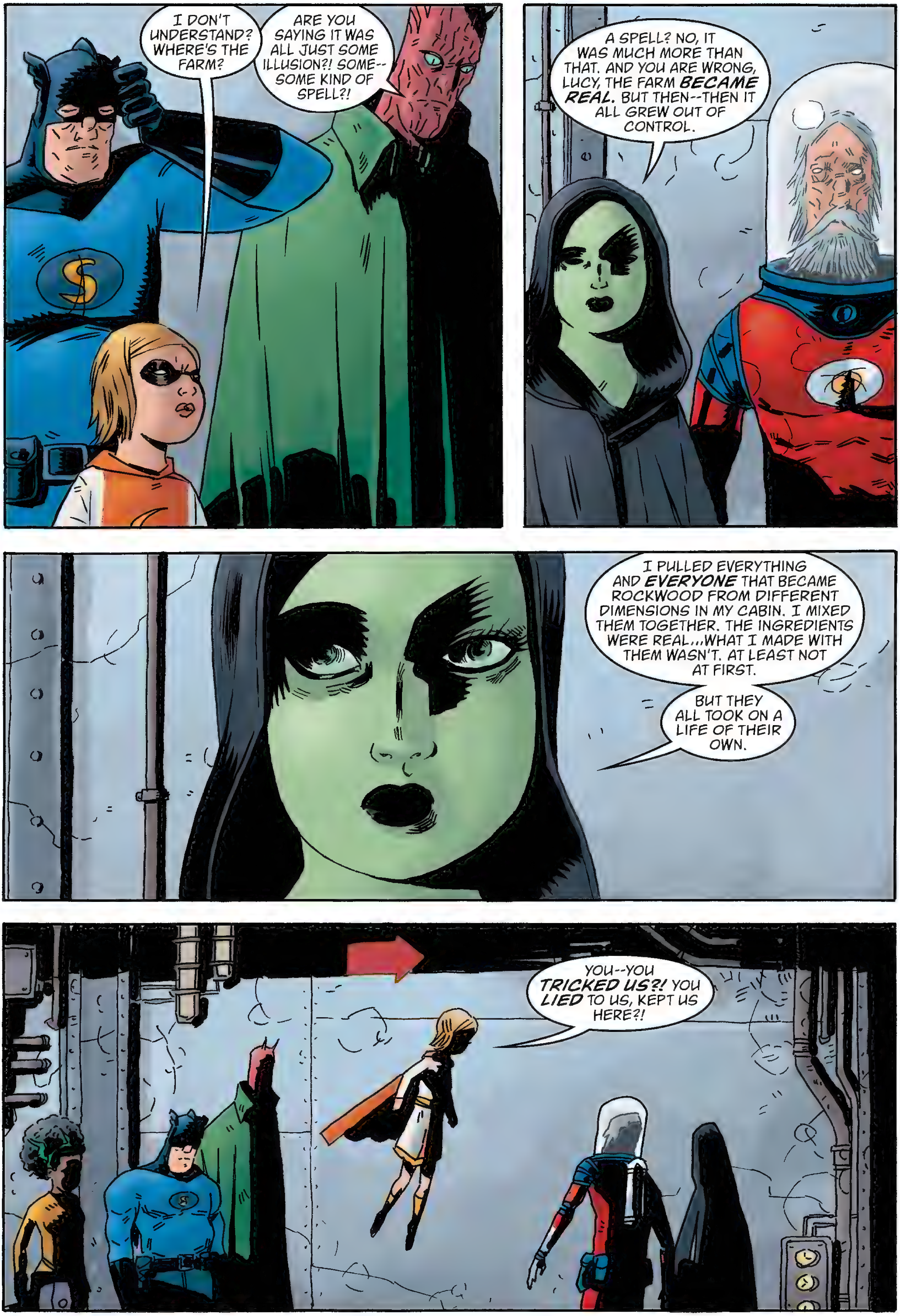

I REALLY APPRECIATE YOU TAKING THE TIME TO SEE ME, DOC. I KNOW YOU'RE RETIRED.
SEMI-RETIRED, LUCY, DEAR. PLUS I WAS A FRIEND OF YOUR FATHER'S. YOU KNOW I'D DO ANYTHING FOR YOU.
"FRIEND"? I'D SAY YOU WERE MORE THAN MY FATHER'S FRIEND. YOU'RE DOCTOR JIMMY ROBINSON... **DOCTOR ANDROMEDA!** MY DAD LOVED YOU.
AH, I MAY STILL WORK IN THE OBSERVATORY FROM TIME TO TIME, BUT ***THOSE*** DAYS ARE BEHIND ME, DEAR.
NOW THEN--I WAS ABLE TO TRACE THE PROBE'S TRAJECTORY BACKWARDS. AND JUST AS ***NASA*** SAID, THERE WAS NOTHING THERE.
HOWEVER, AS YOU KNOW, MY COSMIC-POWERED TELESCOPE CAN SEE THINGS EVEN NASA'S CAN'T.
YOU FOUND SOMETHING UP THERE?!
SEE FOR YOURSELF, LUCY.
MY GOD! IS THAT--?!
YES. IT IS...
"...IT'S A DOORWAY!"
A DOORWAY? A DOORWAY TO ***WHERE?***

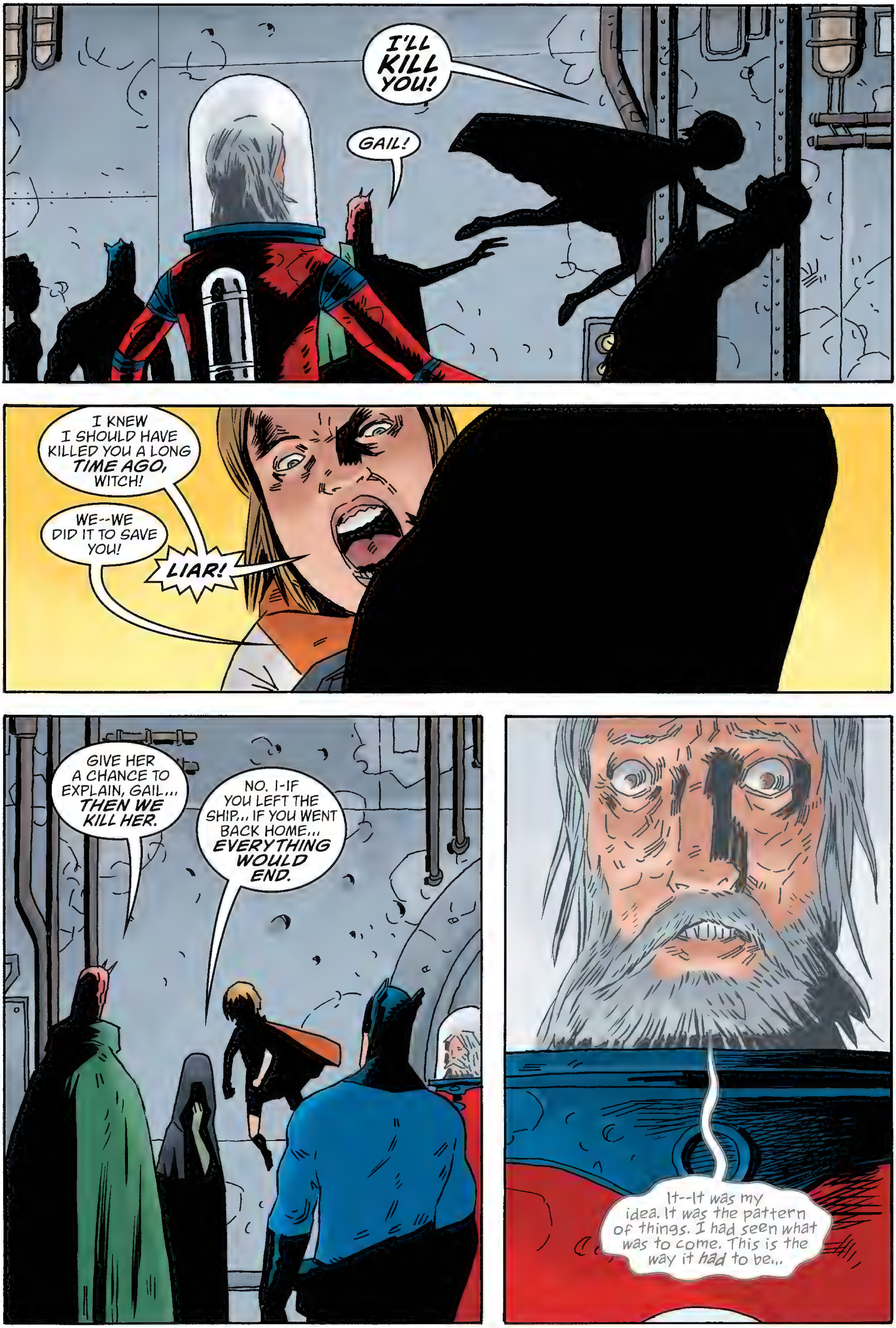

THE **PARA-ZONE,** LUCY. IT'S THE FIRST TIME WE'VE SEEN ANY EVIDENCE OF IT SINCE COLONEL WEIRD AND THE OTHER HEROES FOUGHT ANTI-GOD AND DISAPPEARED.
MY GOD! DO YOU--DO YOU THINK THAT'S WHERE THEY COULD BE? THE **PARA-ZONE?**
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.
BUT I THOUGHT **WEIRD** WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD SAFELY ENTER THE PARA-ZONE?
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
"COLONEL WEIRD AND I ONCE TEAMED UP AND SHARED AN ADVENTURE IN THE PARA-ZONE. YOU SEE, THAT IS WHERE **MY POWERS** CAME FROM AS WELL!"
I DISCOVERED THAT MY COSMIC DEVICE PROTECTED ME. I COULD SAFELY ENTER THE PARA-ZONE TOO!
NO OFFENSE, DOC, BUT I THINK YOU MAY BE A BIT LONG IN THE TOOTH TO TRY THAT AGAIN.
HA HA! OF COURSE I AM, MY DEAR...

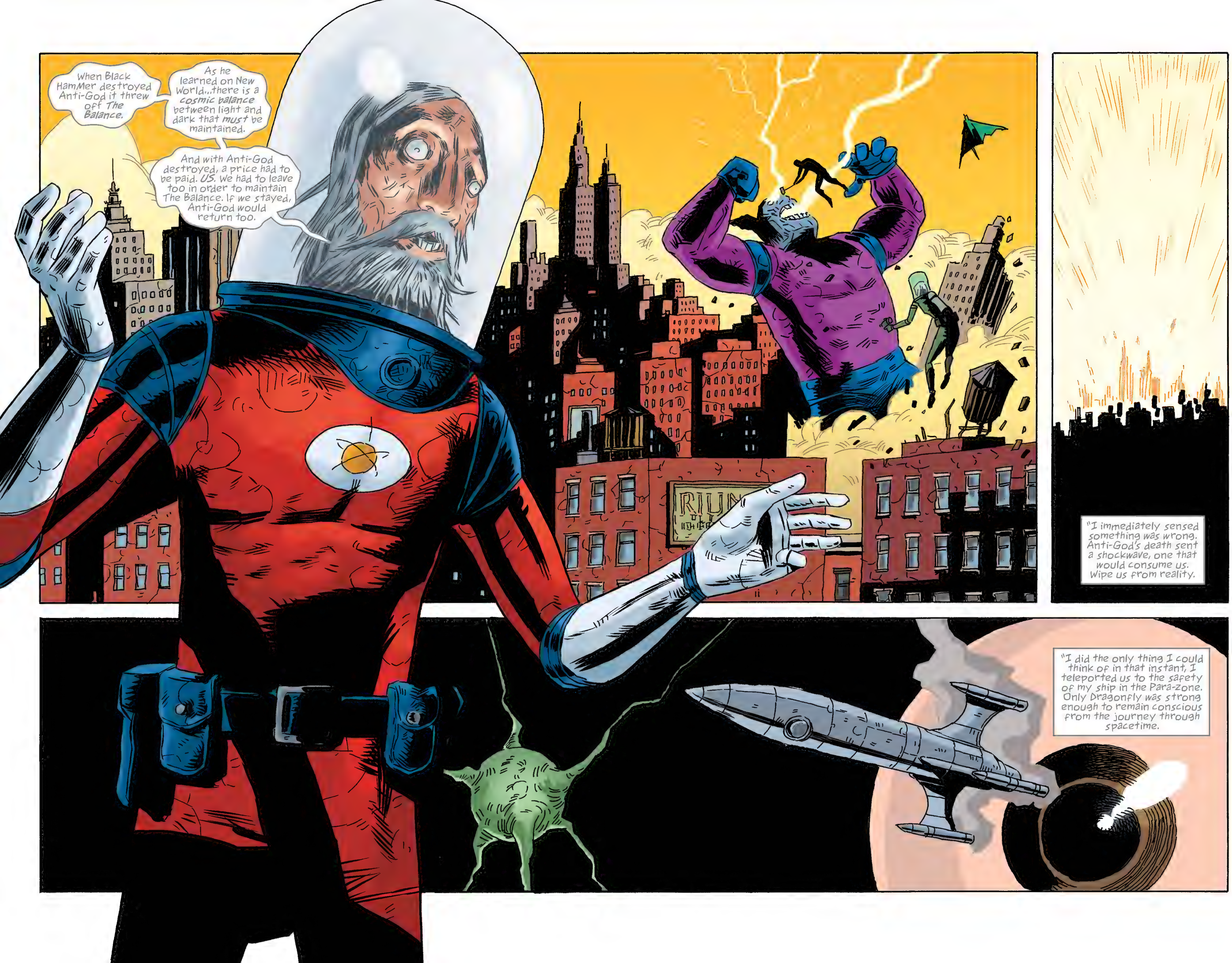
"BUT *YOU'RE NOT.*"
I CAN'T BELIEVE I LET YOU TALK ME INTO THIS, DOC!
YOU'RE DOING FINE, LUCY. THE PARA-SUIT IS FUNCTIONING PERFECTLY AND YOU'VE SPENT THE LAST SIX MONTHS TRAINING FOR THIS. JUST BREATHE AND REMEMBER WHY YOU'RE OUT THERE...
I'M--I'M IN THE PARA-ZONE! I--I THINK I SEE SOMETHING! IT'S--
OH MY GOD!
And that's the last thing I remember before I showed up on the farm. Well, not ***exactly*** the last thing…

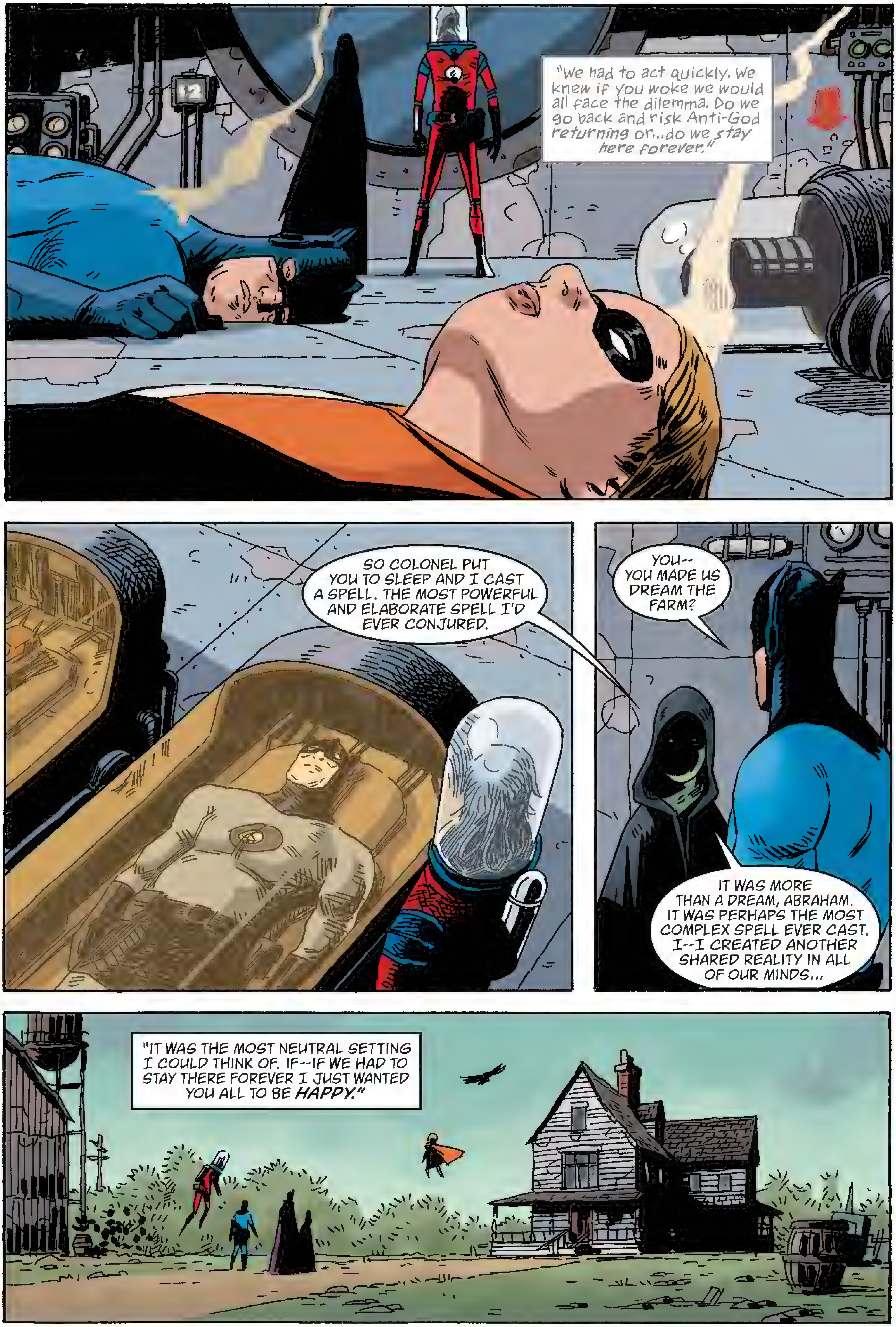

I couldn't believe my eyes. The Cabin of Horrors and Colonel Weird's ship.
And there you all were. In stasis.
Then **Madame Dragonfly** appeared.
M-MADAME DRAGONFLY?!
And she ***took me to the farm.*** Erased my memories…

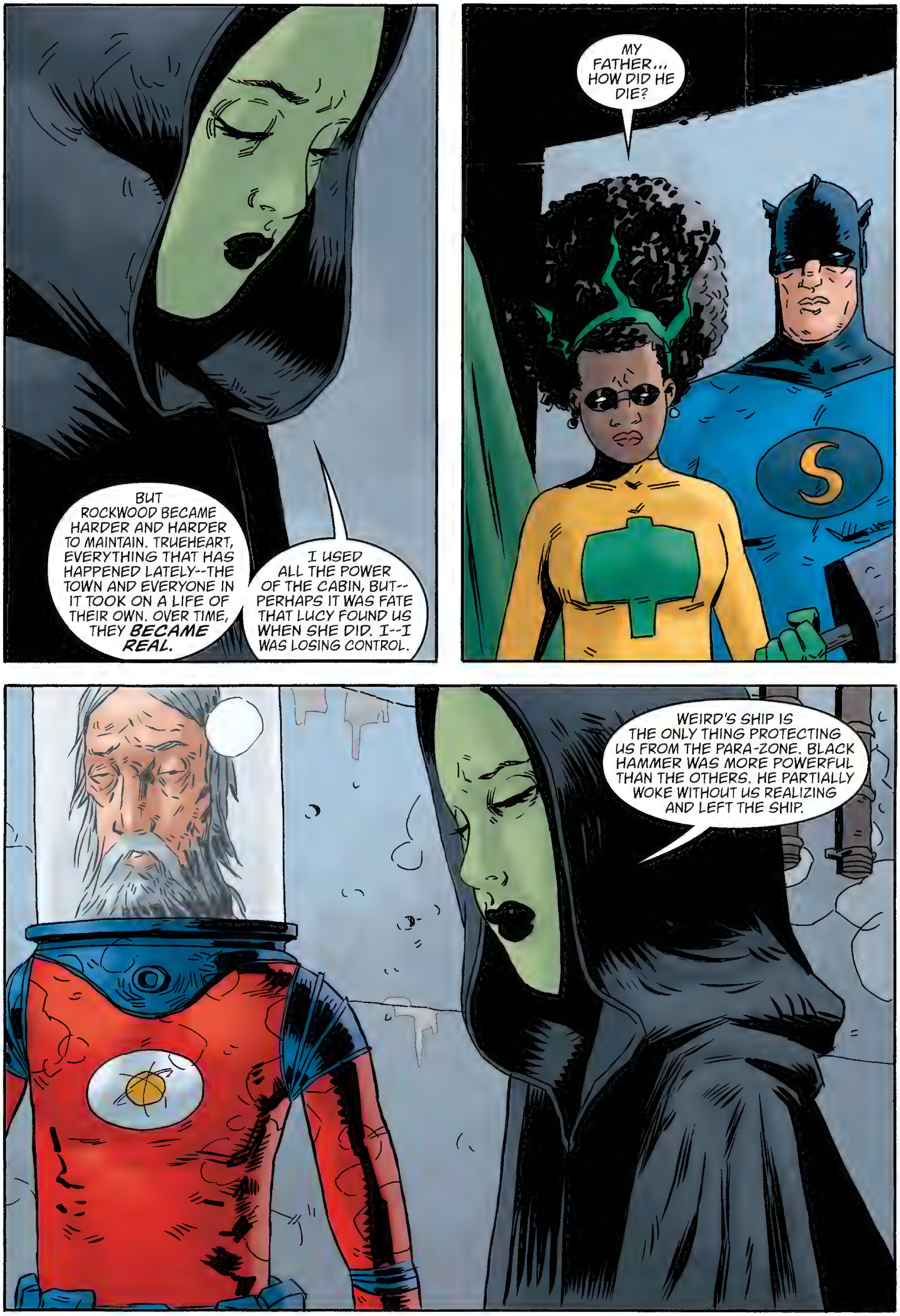

BUT THE FARM *NEVER EXISTED.* NOT REALLY. ALL THAT TIME *THIS* WAS THE ONLY THING THAT WAS REAL.
THIS IS WHERE YOU'VE BEEN *ALL ALONG.*
NO,,, NO--I CAN'T--


I DON'T UNDERSTAND? WHERE'S THE FARM?
ARE YOU SAYING IT WAS ALL JUST SOME ILLUSION?! SOME--SOME KIND OF SPELL?!
A SPELL? NO, IT WAS MUCH MORE THAN THAT. AND YOU ARE WRONG, LUCY, THE FARM **BECAME REAL.** BUT THEN--THEN IT ALL GREW OUT OF CONTROL.
I PULLED EVERYTHING AND **EVERYONE** THAT BECAME ROCKWOOD FROM DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS IN MY CABIN. I MIXED THEM TOGETHER. THE INGREDIENTS WERE REAL...WHAT I MADE WITH THEM WASN'T. AT LEAST NOT AT FIRST.
BUT THEY ALL TOOK ON A LIFE OF THEIR OWN.
YOU--YOU **TRICKED US?!** YOU **LIED** TO US, KEPT US HERE?!

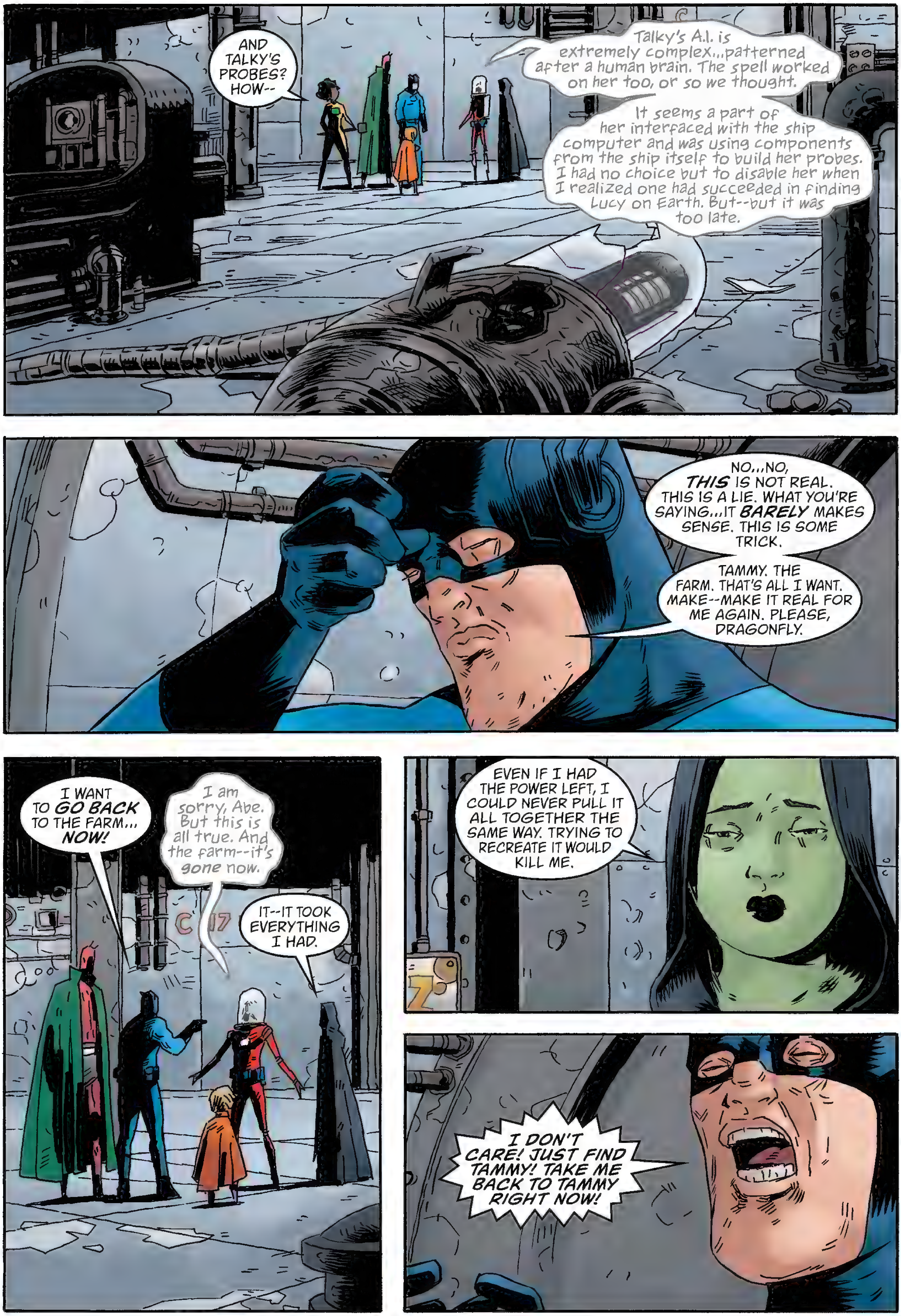

I'LL KILL YOU!
GAIL!
I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE KILLED YOU A LONG TIME AGO, WITCH!
WE--WE DID IT TO SAVE YOU!
LIAR!
GIVE HER A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN, GAIL... THEN WE KILL HER.
NO. I-IF YOU LEFT THE SHIP... IF YOU WENT BACK HOME... EVERYTHING WOULD END.
It--It was my idea. It was the pattern of things. I had seen what was to come. This is the way it had to be...

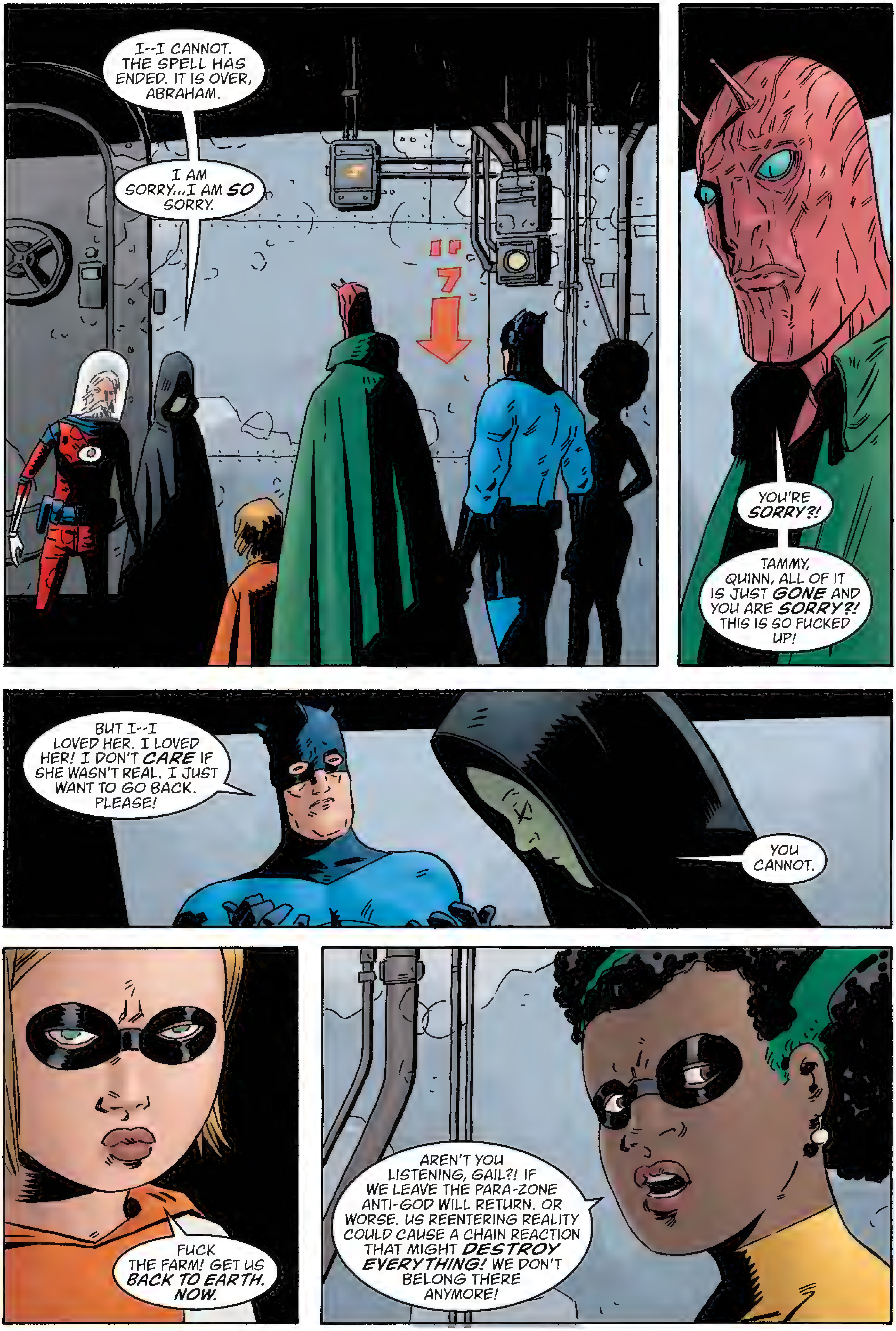

When Black HamMer destroyed Anti-God it threw off *The Balance.*
As he learned on New World...there is a *cosmic balance* between light and dark that *must* be maintained.
And with Anti-God destroyed, a price had to be paid. *US.* We had to leave too in order to maintain The Balance. If we stayed, Anti-God would return too.
"I immediately sensed something was wrong. Anti-God's death sent a shockwave, one that would consume us. Wipe us from reality.
"I did the only thing I could think of in that instant, I teleported us to the safety of my ship in the Para-Zone. Only Dragonfly was strong enough to remain conscious from the journey through spacetime.

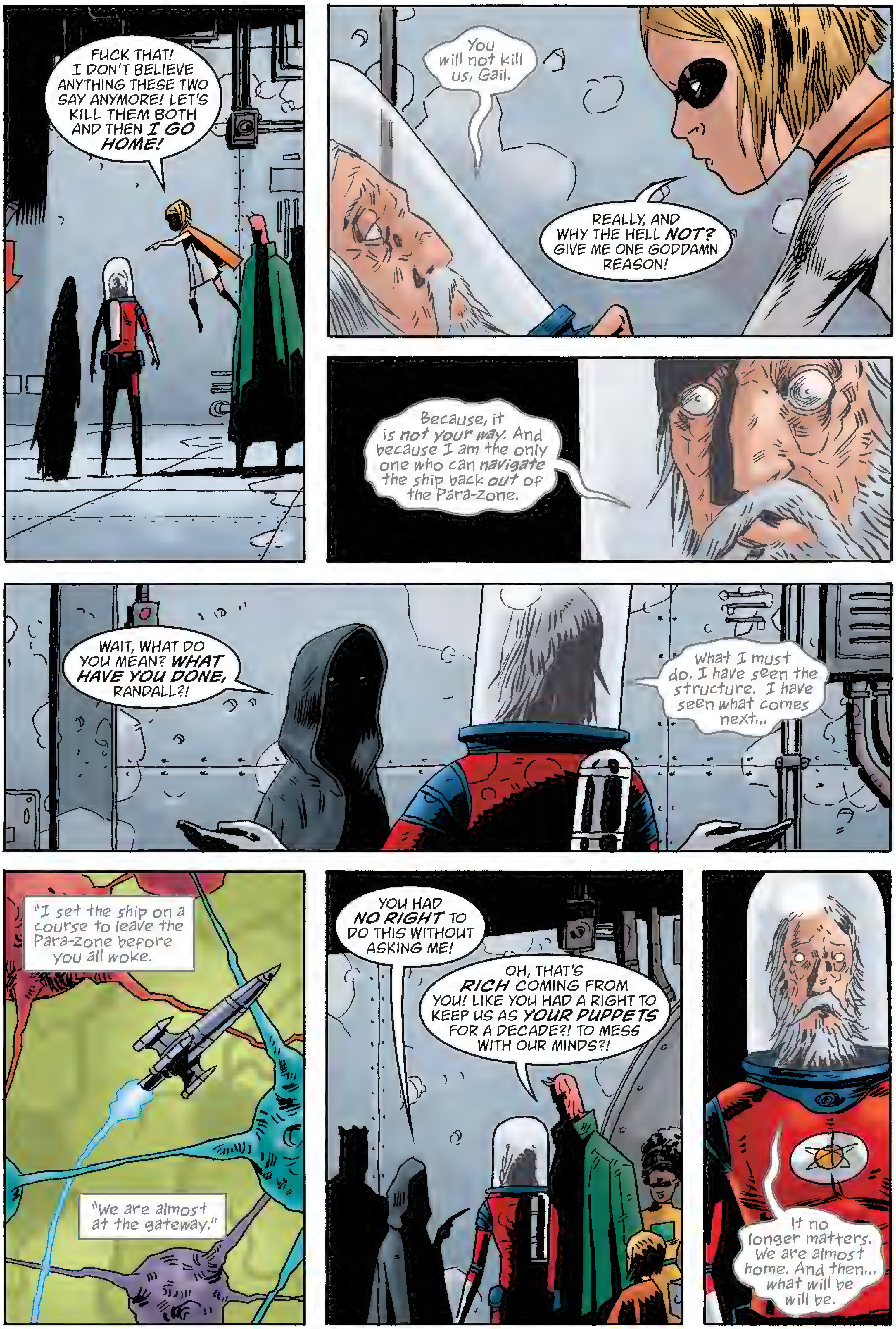

12
"We had to act quickly. We knew if you woke we would all face the dilemma. Do we go back and risk Anti-God returning or...do we *stay* here forever."
SO COLONEL PUT YOU TO SLEEP AND I CAST A SPELL. THE MOST POWERFUL AND ELABORATE SPELL I'D EVER CONJURED.
YOU-- YOU MADE US DREAM THE FARM?
IT WAS MORE THAN A DREAM, ABRAHAM. IT WAS PERHAPS THE MOST COMPLEX SPELL EVER CAST. I--I CREATED ANOTHER SHARED REALITY IN ALL OF OUR MINDS...
"IT WAS THE MOST NEUTRAL SETTING I COULD THINK OF. IF--IF WE HAD TO STAY THERE FOREVER I JUST WANTED YOU ALL TO BE *HAPPY*."


BUT ROCKWOOD BECAME HARDER AND HARDER TO MAINTAIN. TRUEHEART, EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED LATELY--THE TOWN AND EVERYONE IN IT TOOK ON A LIFE OF THEIR OWN. OVER TIME, THEY **BECAME REAL.**
I USED ALL THE POWER OF THE CABIN, BUT-- PERHAPS IT WAS FATE THAT LUCY FOUND US WHEN SHE DID. I--I WAS LOSING CONTROL.
MY FATHER... HOW DID HE DIE?
WEIRD'S SHIP IS THE ONLY THING PROTECTING US FROM THE PARA-ZONE. BLACK HAMMER WAS MORE POWERFUL THAN THE OTHERS. HE PARTIALLY WOKE WITHOUT US REALIZING AND LEFT THE SHIP.

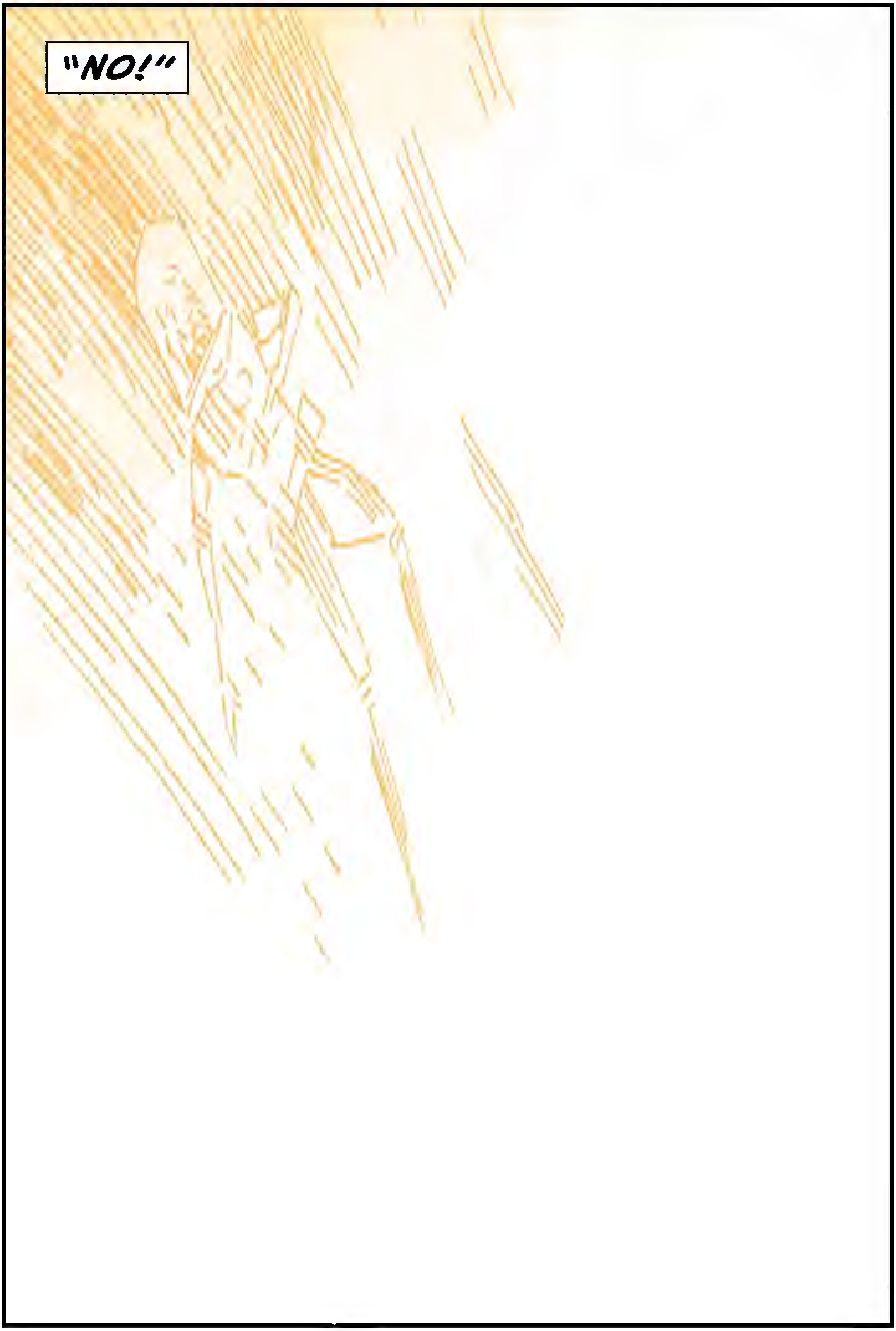
"BY THE TIME WEIRD AND I REALIZED WHAT WAS HAPPENING, BLACK HAMMER HAD ALREADY FLOWN OUT INTO THE PARA-ZONE UNPROTECTED."
"The border of the farm, what you knew as the perimeter that you could not pass, that was really my ship's boundaries."
The Para-zone killed your father.


AND TALKY'S PROBES? HOW--
Talky's A.I. is extremely complex...patterned after a human brain. The spell worked on her too, or so we thought.
It seems a part of her interfaced with the ship computer and was using components from the ship itself to build her probes. I had no choice but to disable her when I realized one had succeeded in finding Lucy on Earth. But--but it was too late.
NO...NO, *THIS* IS NOT REAL. THIS IS A LIE. WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...IT *BARELY* MAKES SENSE. THIS IS SOME TRICK.
TAMMY. THE FARM. THAT'S ALL I WANT. MAKE--MAKE IT REAL FOR ME AGAIN. PLEASE, DRAGONFLY.
I WANT TO ***GO BACK*** TO THE FARM... ***NOW!***
I am sorry, Abe. But this is all true. And the farm--it's gone now.
IT--IT TOOK EVERYTHING I HAD.
C 17
EVEN IF I HAD THE POWER LEFT, I COULD NEVER PULL IT ALL TOGETHER THE SAME WAY. TRYING TO RECREATE IT WOULD KILL ME.
I DON'T CARE! JUST FIND TAMMY! TAKE ME BACK TO TAMMY RIGHT NOW!


I--I CANNOT. THE SPELL HAS ENDED. IT IS OVER, ABRAHAM.
I AM SORRY...I AM **SO** SORRY.
YOU'RE **SORRY?!**
TAMMY, QUINN, ALL OF IT IS JUST **GONE** AND YOU ARE **SORRY?!** THIS IS SO FUCKED UP!
BUT I--I LOVED HER. I LOVED HER! I DON'T **CARE** IF SHE WASN'T REAL. I JUST WANT TO GO BACK. PLEASE!
YOU CANNOT.
FUCK THE FARM! GET US **BACK TO EARTH. NOW.**
AREN'T YOU LISTENING, GAIL?! IF WE LEAVE THE PARA-ZONE ANTI-GOD WILL RETURN. OR WORSE. US REENTERING REALITY COULD CAUSE A CHAIN REACTION THAT MIGHT **DESTROY EVERYTHING!** WE DON'T BELONG THERE ANYMORE!


FUCK THAT! I DON'T BELIEVE ANYTHING THESE TWO SAY ANYMORE! LET'S KILL THEM BOTH AND THEN *I GO HOME!*
You will not kill us, Gail.
REALLY, AND WHY THE HELL *NOT?* GIVE ME ONE GODDAMN REASON!
Because, it is *not your way*. And because I am the only one who can *navigate* the ship back *out* of the Para-zone.
WAIT, WHAT DO YOU MEAN? *WHAT HAVE YOU DONE,* RANDALL?!
What I must do. I have seen the structure. I have seen what comes next...
"I set the ship on a course to leave the Para-zone before you all woke.
"We are almost at the gateway."
YOU HAD *NO RIGHT* TO DO THIS WITHOUT ASKING ME!
OH, THAT'S *RICH* COMING FROM YOU! LIKE YOU HAD A RIGHT TO KEEP US AS *YOUR PUPPETS* FOR A DECADE?! TO MESS WITH OUR MINDS?!
It no longer matters. We are almost home. And then... what will be will be.

YOU'VE **DOOMED** US! YOU'LL KILL US ALL AND EVERYONE IN THE UNIVERSE IF THE ANTI-GOD RETURNS!
WH-WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
TURN AROUND! TAKE US BACK!
Too late, Abraham...it is done.
NO!


"NO!"

QUACK!

WEIRD

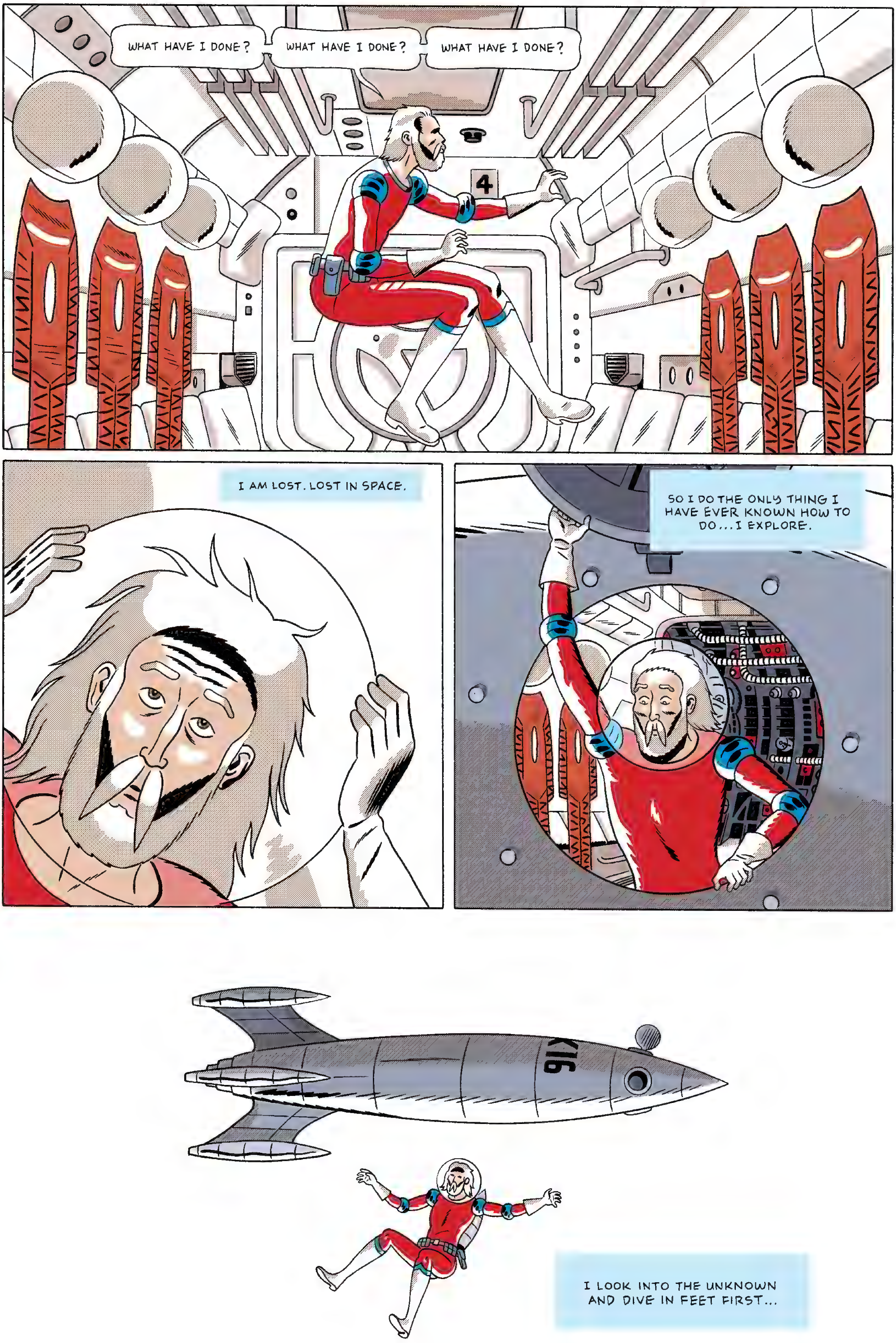
I HAVE SEEN THE SECRET STRUCTURE THAT LIES BENEATH EVERYTHING. THE ULTIMATE TRUTH.
AND BECAUSE OF THAT, DRAGONFLY AND I HAD TO MAKE CHOICES. WE HAVE HAD TO LIE TO THE ONLY PEOPLE IN THE WORLD I LOVE... MY FRIENDS. MY--MY FAMILY.
BUT I KNEW THIS MOMENT WOULD COME. I KNEW THAT THE TRUTH WOULD BE REVEALED.
AND I KNEW THAT THEY WOULD HATE ME FOR IT.
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, RANDALL?!
I SET THE SHIP ON A COURSE TO LEAVE THE PARA-ZONE BEFORE YOU ALL WOKE. WE ARE ALMOST AT THE GATEWAY...
YOU HAD NO RIGHT TO DO THIS WITHOUT ASKING ME!
IT NO LONGER MATTERS. WE ARE ALMOST HOME. AND THEN... WHAT WILL BE, WILL BE...

THIS IS THE MOMENT OF TRUTH.
YOU'VE DOOMED US! YOU'LL KILL US ALL AND EVERYONE IN THE UNIVERSE IF ANTI-GOD RETURNS!
WH-WHAT'S HAPPENING?!!
TURN AROUND! TAKE US BACK!
TOO LATE, ABRAHAM...
IT IS DONE.
NO!

I HAVE SEEN THE PATTERN OF REALITY. I HAVE SEEN **EVERYTHING**. BUT THIS...

THIS I DID NOT SEE COMING.
HELLO?

GAIL?
ABRAHAM?
ANYONE?
!
SHIP, SCAN THE EXTERIOR SPACE... DETERMINE OUR SURROUNDINGS AND LOCATION.
KZZT
SHIP?
KZZT


WHAT HAVE I DONE?
WHAT HAVE I DONE?
WHAT HAVE I DONE?
4
I AM LOST. LOST IN SPACE.
SO I DO THE ONLY THING I HAVE EVER KNOWN HOW TO DO... I EXPLORE.
K16
I LOOK INTO THE UNKNOWN AND DIVE IN FEET FIRST...

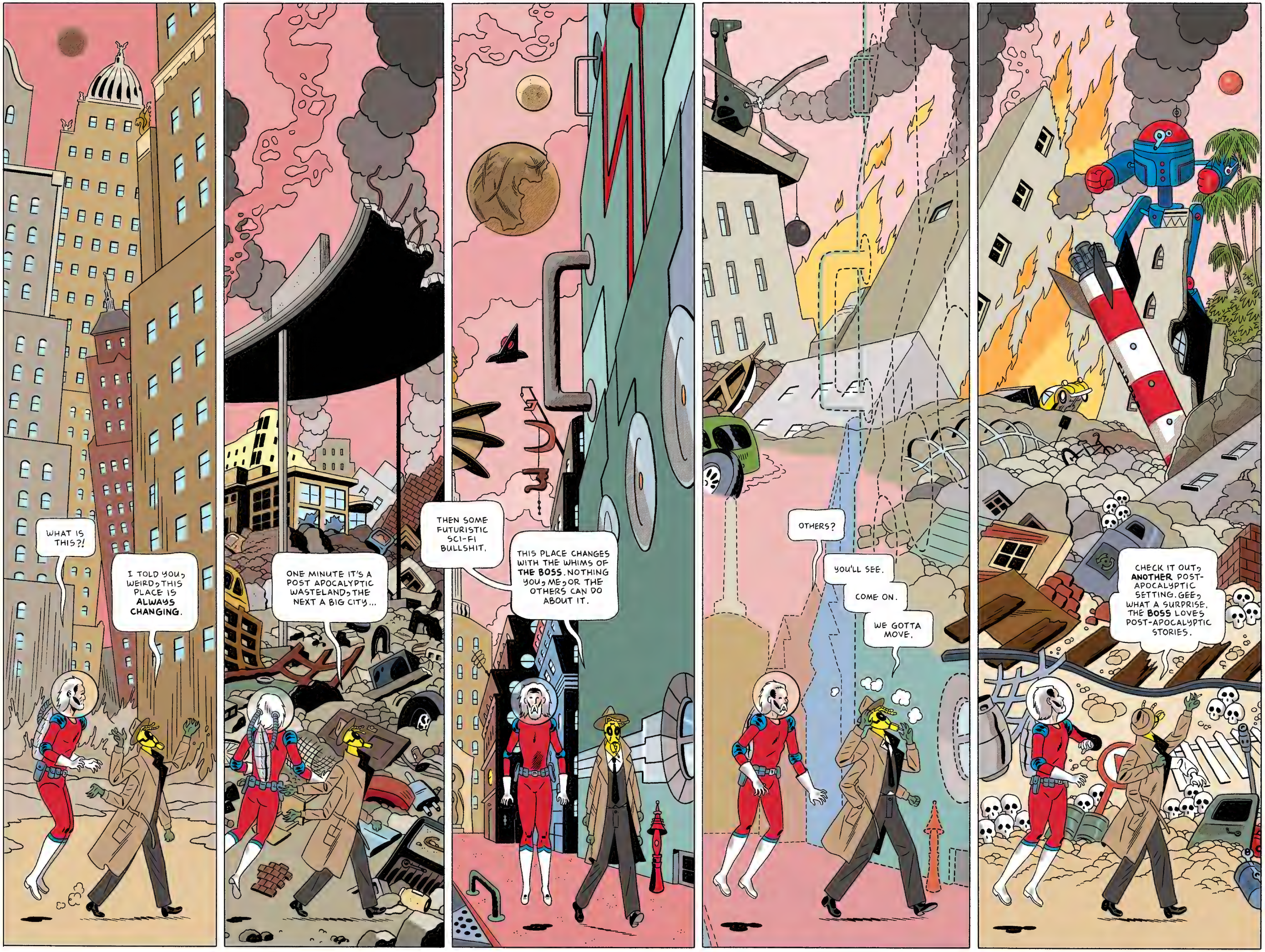
MY NAME WAS COLONEL RANDALL WEIRD. I WAS A HERO ONCE. I WAS A **MAN** ONCE.
X16
BUT NOW... NOW I AM NO ONE AND I AM NOWHERE.
AND I AM VERY **VERY** SCARED.
OH!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAA!
THUNK!
OOF!

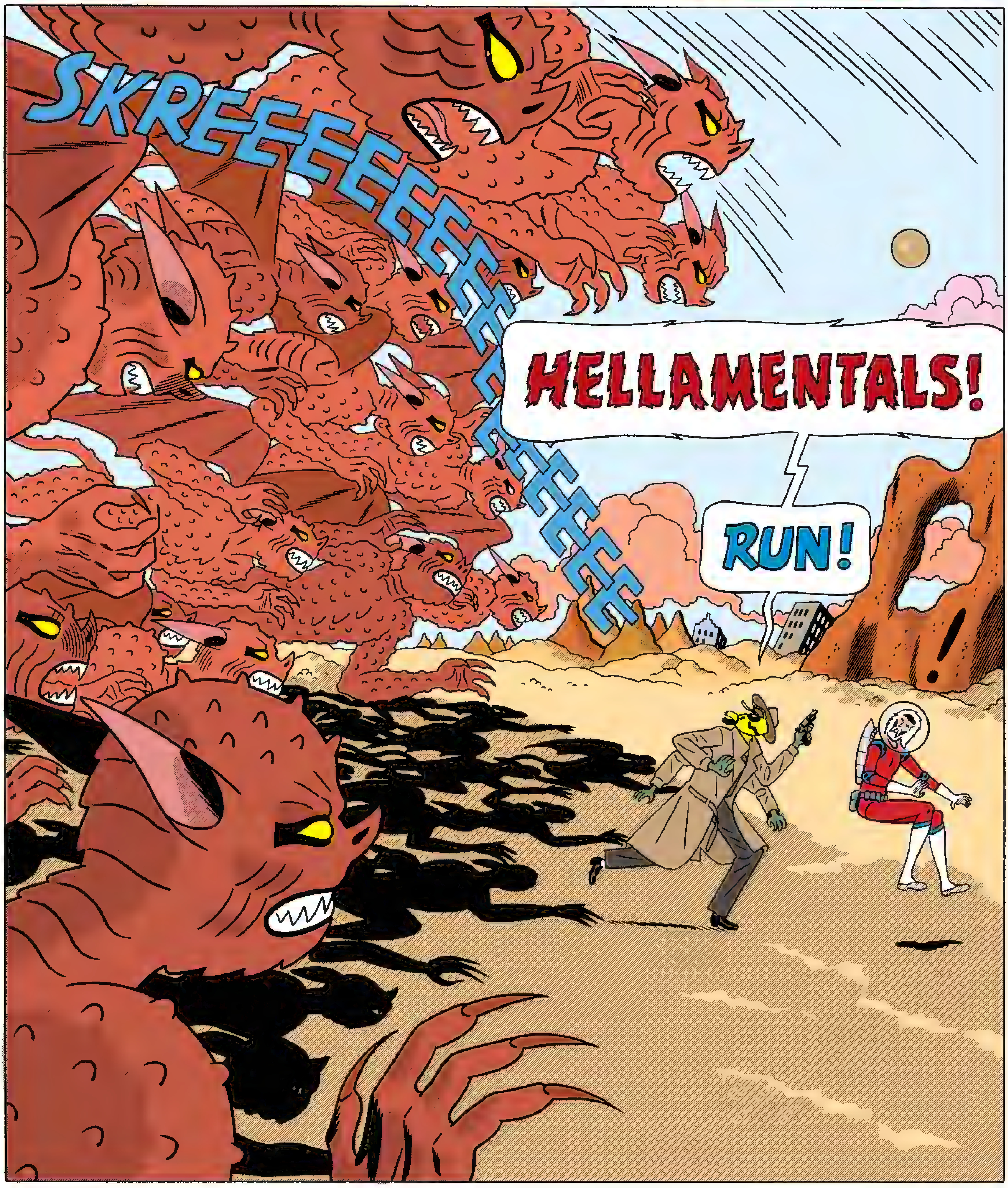
?!
WELL, WELL, WELL, LOOK WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN.
Inspector Insector
PRI
WANTED
WHO--
WHO ARE YOU?
WHERE AM I?
WHO AM I--NAME'S RIGHT ON THE DOOR, CHIEF. I'M INSPECTOR INSECTOR--
AS FAR AS **WHERE** YOU ARE...WELL, THAT ONE'S A BIT **TOUGHER** TO ANSWER.
WANTED
WANTED

I-I THINK MAYBE I'M LOST.
I WAS WITH MY FRIENDS AND THEY DISAPPEARED-- **EVERYTHING** DISAPPEARED.
WANTED
WANTED
WANT
UH-HUH -- AND THESE FRIENDS OF YOURS, WERE THEY OF THE **FANTASTIC SORT**, LIKE YOU AND I?
FANTASTIC SORT?
YEAH, FANCY COSTUMES, AMAZING POWERS, AND INCREDIBLE ORIGINS. YOU KNOW THE TYPE.
WELL, YES I SUPPOSE THEY WERE.
UH-HUH. WELL, I HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, PAL, BUT YOU'RE NOT EVER GOING TO SEE YOUR FRIENDS AGAIN.
FLAP!
Inspector Insector

WHY NOT? **WHERE** IS THIS?
I TOLD YOU, THAT'S HARD TO DEFINE. THIS PLACE IS **NOWHERE**--AND IT'S **ALWAYS CHANGING**.
WANTED
WANTED
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
MY OFFICE KEEPS DISAPPEARING. IT HAPPENS A LOT. PLACE COMES AND GOES LIKE PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING ELSE AROUND HERE.
COME ON, WE BETTER GET A MOVE ON. IT'S NOT SAFE HERE ANYMORE.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME ANYWAY, PAL?
WEIRD--COLONEL RANDALL WEIRD.
HEH. GOOD HANDLE. NICE TO MEET YA, RANDY.


WHAT IS THIS?!
I TOLD YOU, WEIRD, THIS PLACE IS **ALWAYS CHANGING**.
ONE MINUTE IT'S A POST APOCALYPTIC WASTELAND, THE NEXT A BIG CITY...
THEN SOME FUTURISTIC SCI-FI BULLSHIT.
THIS PLACE CHANGES WITH THE WHIMS OF **THE BOSS**. NOTHING YOU, ME, OR THE OTHERS CAN DO ABOUT IT.
OTHERS?
YOU'LL SEE.
COME ON.
WE GOTTA MOVE.
CHECK IT OUT, **ANOTHER** POST-APOCALYPTIC SETTING. GEE, WHAT A SURPRISE. THE **BOSS** LOVES POST-APOCALYPTIC STORIES.

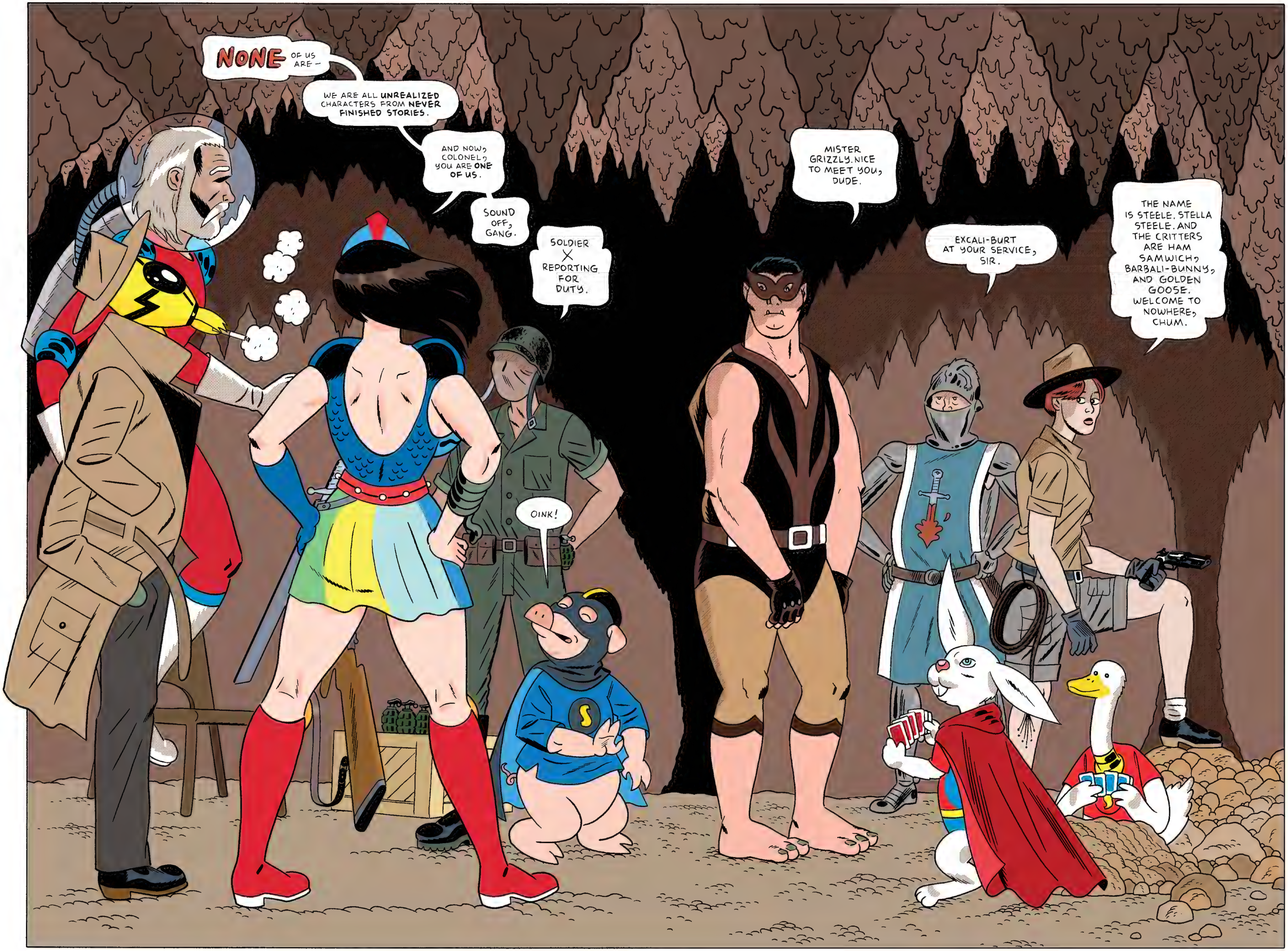
HOLD UP.
WHAT IS IT?


SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
HELLAMENTALS!
RUN!
!

BLAM!
HELLAMENTALS?
DON'T LET 'EM TOUCH YOU! IF YOU DO, YOU **REALLY WILL** BE NOTHING!
BLAM!
KZAK
RAYGUN?! NICE... 'CAUSE I THINK I'M RUNNING OUT OF BULLETS!
CLICK CLICK CLICK
FWOOSH!

HELLO, INSPECTOR. DON'T TELL ME WE ACTUALLY HAVE A NEW **ARRIVAL?**
MS. MOONBEAM!
297
YEAH, ANOTHER **LOST CAUSE.** MEET COLONEL WEIRD.
GREETINGS, COLONEL. AS MUCH AS I WOULD LOVE TO HEAR **YOUR STORY,** WE BEST BE ON THE MOVE. MORE HELLAMENTALS WILL BE HERE SOON. ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY LEARN ABOUT **YOU.**

IT IS A GOOD THING I DECIDED TO COME LOOKING FOR YOU, INSPECTOR. THE HELLAMENTALS ARE **EVERYWHERE** TODAY.
IT SEEMS OUR NEW ARRIVAL HAS REALLY STIRRED THINGS UP.
PLEASE -- I NEED TO KNOW WHAT **ALL OF THIS** IS! I NEED TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME AND MY FRIENDS!
WE'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING, BUT UNLESS WE GET TO COVER, WE AREN'T GOING TO LAST THE NIGHT, SO NONE OF IT WILL MATTER.
ARE YOU TWO PART OF SOME SORT OF SUPER HERO TEAM? IS THIS AN ALTERNATE UNIVERSE?
SUPER HERO TEAM? HA! I WISH!
WE ARE NO TEAM, COLONEL.
YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE YOU ARE NO LONGER NEEDED.


NONE OF US ARE–
WE ARE ALL UNREALIZED CHARACTERS FROM NEVER FINISHED STORIES.
AND NOW, COLONEL, YOU ARE ONE OF US.
SOUND OFF, GANG.
SOLDIER X REPORTING FOR DUTY.
OINK!
MISTER GRIZZLY. NICE TO MEET YOU, DUDE.
EXCALI-BURT AT YOUR SERVICE, SIR.
THE NAME IS STEELE. STELLA STEELE. AND THE CRITTERS ARE HAM SAMWICH, BARBALI-BUNNY, AND GOLDEN GOOSE. WELCOME TO NOWHERE, CHUM.

THIS-THIS CANNOT BE RIGHT. UNFINISHED STORIES?! BUT I DON'T BELONG HERE! I BELONG WITH ABRAHAM AND GAIL AND BARBALIEN.
WE LEFT THE PARA-ZONE TOGETHER. WE--WE RE-ENTERED THE UNIVERSE. BUT THEN--THEY ALL DISAPPEARED.
I'D WAGER A BET THAT IT WASN'T THEM WHO DISAPPEARED, WEIRD. IT WAS **YOU**.
BUT, WHY?! WHY DIDN'T **I** GO WITH THEM, WHEREVER **THEY WENT**?!
WHOMEVER YOUR FRIENDS ARE, WHEREVER THEY WENT, YOU'RE NOT PART OF THEIR STORY ANYMORE.
I--I'VE BROKEN EVERYTHING HAVEN'T I?
I JUST WANT TO GO BACK TO THE FARM.

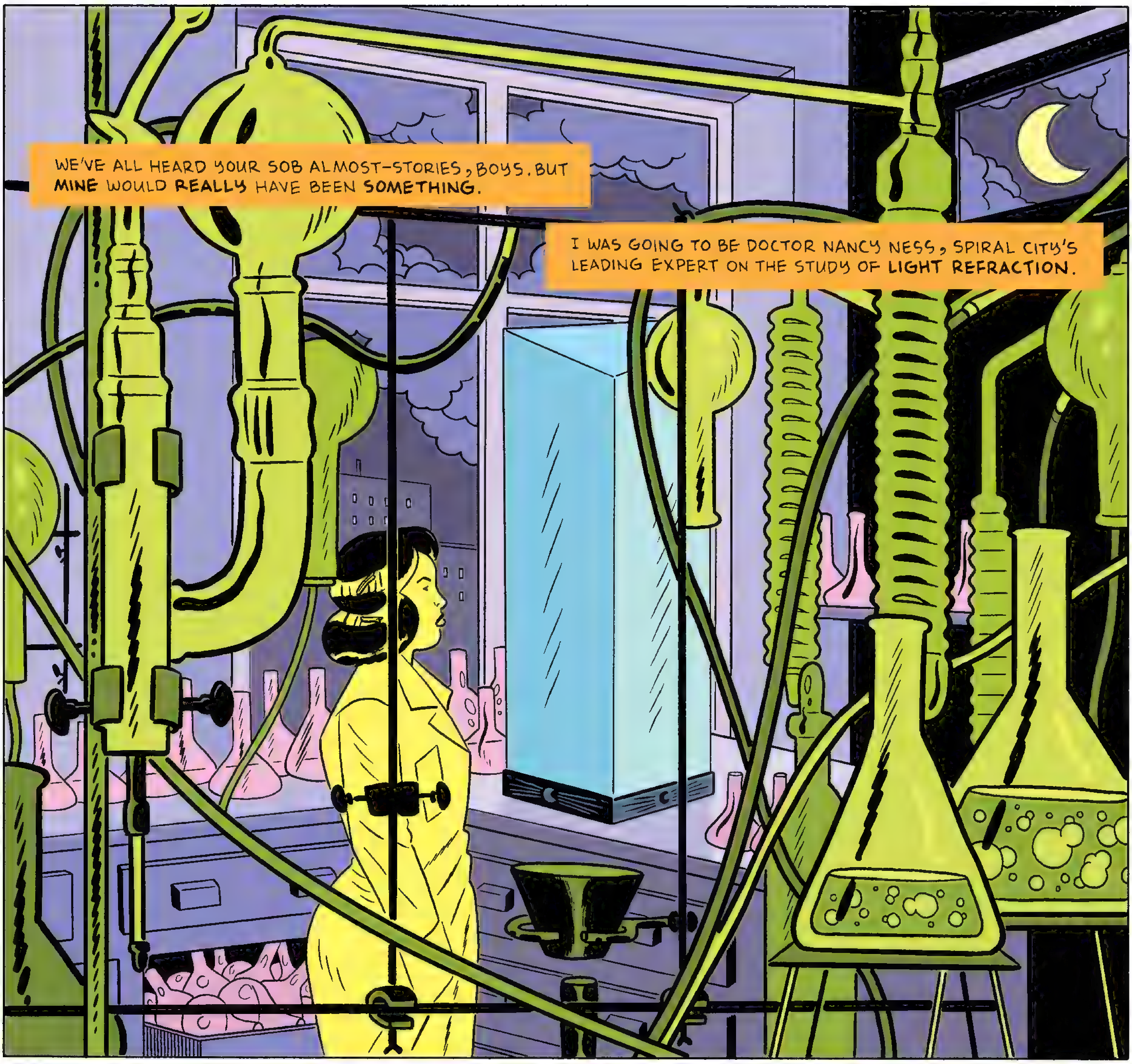
THOOM!!!
WHAT IS THAT?!
!
!
I HAVE NO IDEA, THAT'S NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE!
HURRY EVERYONE, TOPSIDE!
QUACK!
WHAT IN **MERLIN'S BEARD** IS THAT?!
NO! IT-IT CAN'T BE!

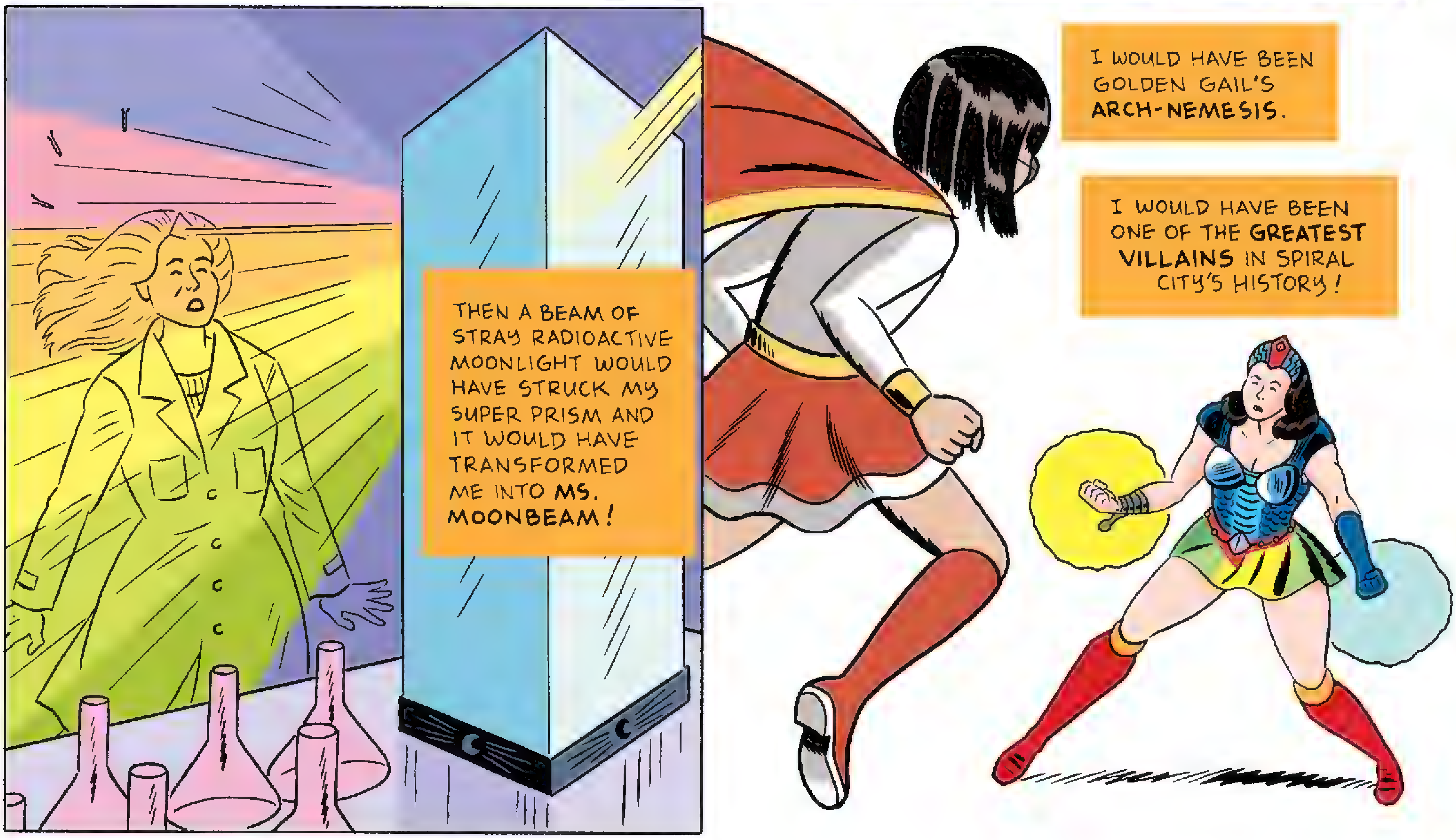
ANTI-GOD IS HERE!!!

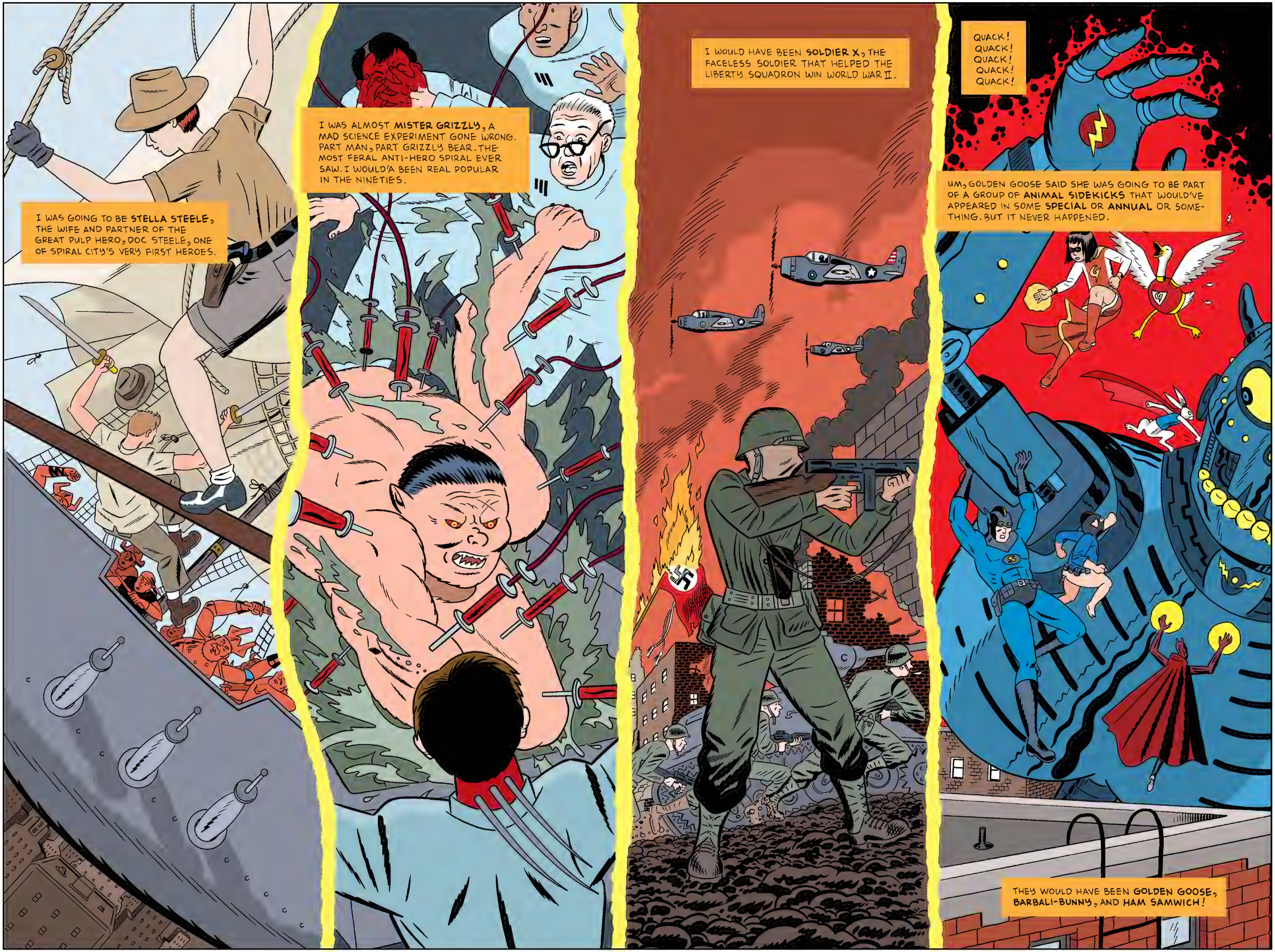
CTW

MY TALE WOULD HAVE HAD HUMBLE ORIGINS. I WAS TO BE A REGULAR, MIDDLE-AGED SQUIRE NAMED **BURT LANCELOT** WHO WOULD HAVE STUMBLED UPON THE LEGENDARY SWORD **EXCALIBUR** ONE NIGHT IN **SPIRAL CITY SWAMP**!
THERE, IN A RUSH OF GLORY, I WOULD HAVE SUCCEEDED IN PULLING THE SWORD FROM THE STONE AND BEING IMBUED WITH THE **MAGICAL POWER** OF KING ARTHUR'S COURT!
SOON AFTER I WOULD HAVE DISCOVERED A GATEWAY TO NEW CAMELOT AND BECOME A GREAT PROTECTOR OF SPIRAL CITY!

YEAH, WELL, BIG DEAL. YOU WERE A BARELY FORMED INKLING OF AN IDEA, BURT. I, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS **ALMOST** A REAL STORY.
I CAME **REALLY CLOSE**. I WOULD'VE BEEN A REGULAR GUMSHOE NAMED HARRY TROUBADOUR AND MY STORY WAS GONNA START WITH ME TAKING A CASE FROM A BEAUTIFUL WIDOW TO SEE WHAT HER BUM OF A HUSBAND WAS REALLY UP TO.
HE WAS SMUGGLING GOODS FROM ANCIENT EGYPT AND I WAS GONNA STUMBLE ON SOME WEIRD INSECT ARTIFACT THAT BELONGED TO A PHARAOH.
AND **BAM**! I WAS GONNA BE TRANSFORMED INTO **INSPECTOR INSECTOR**! I WOULD'VE SOLVED A LOT OF REALLY TOUGH CASES.
GUESS I'LL NEVER KNOW. I WOULD HAVE BEEN **FUCKING GREAT**, THOUGH. I JUST **BET** I WOULDA!


WE'VE ALL HEARD YOUR SOB ALMOST-STORIES, BOYS. BUT **MINE** WOULD **REALLY** HAVE BEEN **SOMETHING**.
I WAS GOING TO BE DOCTOR NANCY NESS, SPIRAL CITY'S LEADING EXPERT ON THE STUDY OF **LIGHT REFRACTION**.

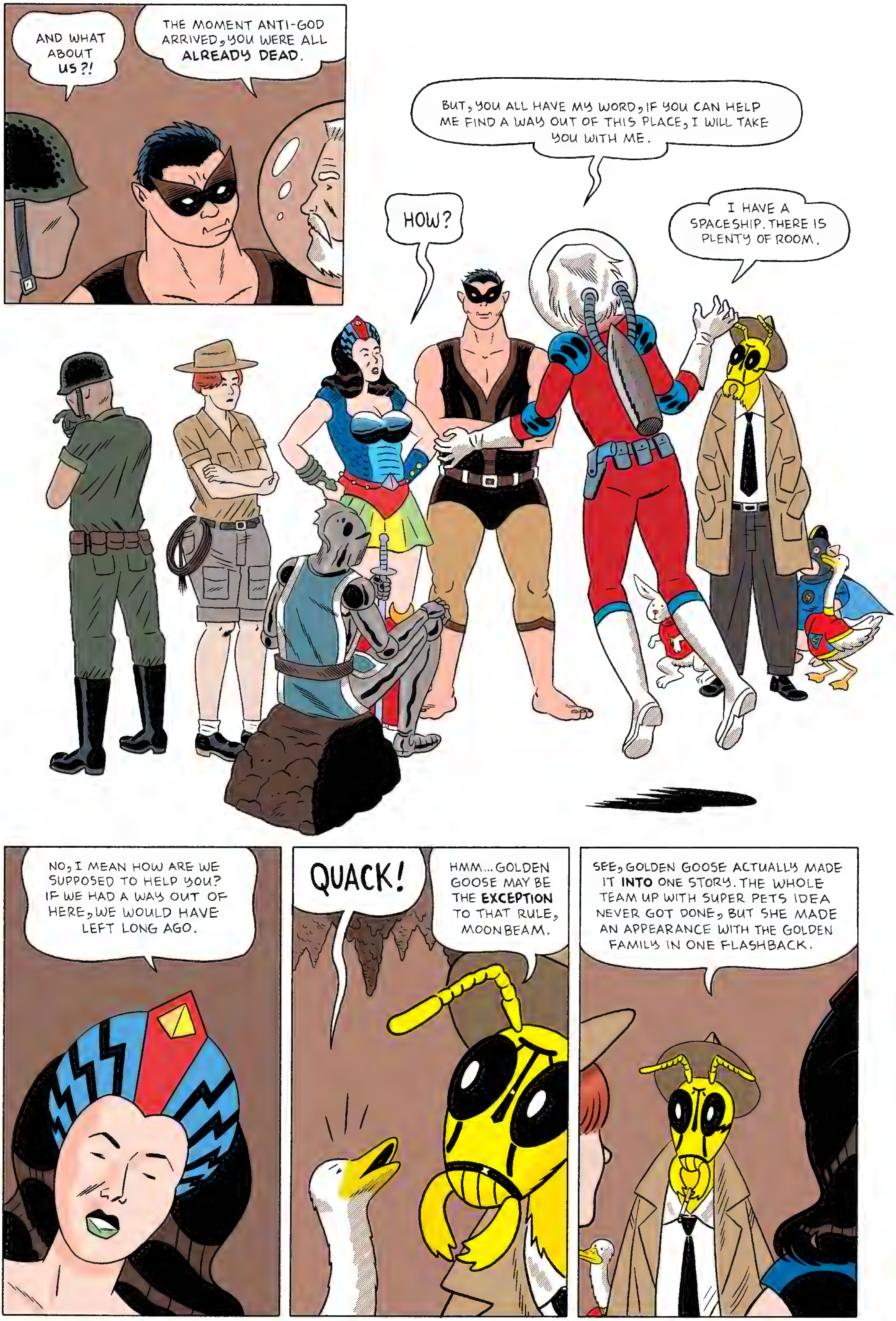

THEN A BEAM OF STRAY RADIOACTIVE MOONLIGHT WOULD HAVE STRUCK MY SUPER PRISM AND IT WOULD HAVE TRANSFORMED ME INTO **MS. MOONBEAM**!
I WOULD HAVE BEEN GOLDEN GAIL'S **ARCH-NEMESIS**.
I WOULD HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE **GREATEST VILLAINS** IN SPIRAL CITY'S HISTORY!


I WAS GOING TO BE **STELLA STEELE**, THE WIFE AND PARTNER OF THE GREAT PULP HERO, DOC STEELE, ONE OF SPIRAL CITY'S VERY FIRST HEROES.
I WAS ALMOST **MISTER GRIZZLY**, A MAD SCIENCE EXPERIMENT GONE WRONG. PART MAN, PART GRIZZLY BEAR. THE MOST FERAL ANTI-HERO SPIRAL EVER SAW. I WOULD'A BEEN REAL POPULAR IN THE NINETIES.
I WOULD HAVE BEEN **SOLDIER X**, THE FACELESS SOLDIER THAT HELPED THE LIBERTY SQUADRON WIN WORLD WAR II.
QUACK! QUACK! QUACK! QUACK! QUACK!
UM, GOLDEN GOOSE SAID SHE WAS GOING TO BE PART OF A GROUP OF **ANIMAL SIDEKICKS** THAT WOULD'VE APPEARED IN SOME **SPECIAL** OR **ANNUAL** OR SOMETHING. BUT IT NEVER HAPPENED.
THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN **GOLDEN GOOSE**, **BARBALI-BUNNY**, AND **HAM SAMWICH**!

WAIT! THESE SUPER PETS WERE MEANT TO BE SIDEKICKS FOR **MY FRIENDS**, THE ONES I WAS SEPARATED FROM!
MAYBE THEY CAN HELP ME?!
OINK!
I SPEAK GOOSE, BUT **NOT PIG**, OKAY?
YOU ALL WOULD HAVE BEEN PART OF SPIRAL CITY. DON'T ANY OF YOU KNOW THE WAY BACK THERE?
THAT'S THE THING, COLONEL. WE WERE GOING TO BE PART OF SPIRAL CITY'S HISTORY... BUT WE **NEVER MADE IT THAT FAR.**
THE FAIR MAIDEN IS RIGHT. WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET TO SPIRAL CITY BECAUSE WE NEVER ACTUALLY GOT THAT FAR OURSELVES. WE ARE ALL CHARACTERS FROM STORIES THAT WERE **IMAGINED** BUT **NEVER FINISHED.**

QUACK! QUACK! QUACK!
WHAT IS SHE SAYING?! DOES SHE KNOW ANYTHING?!
SHE WANTS TO KNOW IF YOU HAVE **REALLY** BEEN WITH GOLDEN GAIL? SHE WANTS TO KNOW HOW SHE IS.
I-I HAVE BEEN WITH GAIL, AND ABRAHAM AND MADAME DRAGONFLY AND BARBALIEN. THEY ARE ALL--THEY WERE ALL--OKAY.
BUT THEN WE ALL CAME BACK TO THE REAL UNIVERSE AND EVERYTHING WENT WHITE AND HERE I WAS. I THINK THEY WENT BACK TO SPIRAL, BUT NOT ME.

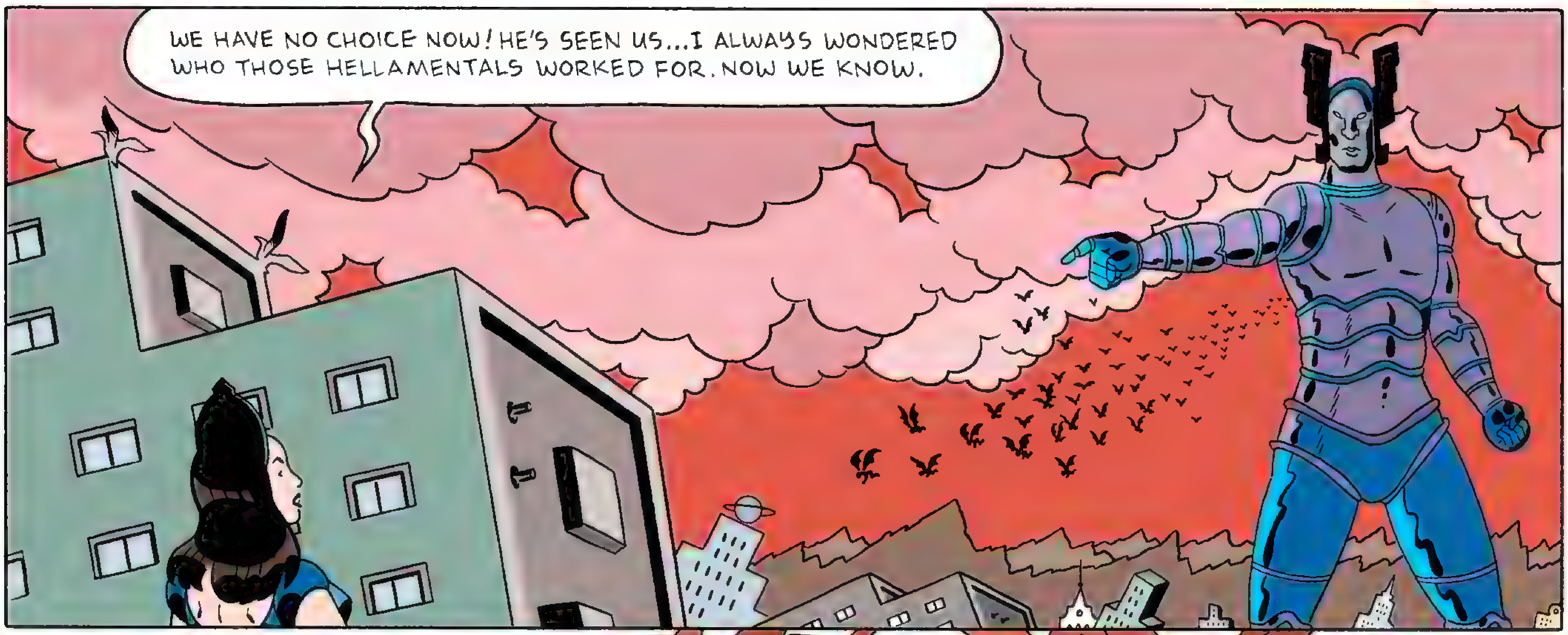
ENOUGH ABOUT YOU, WEIRD! WHAT ABOUT THAT--THAT MONSTROSITY UP THERE?!
WHAT ABOUT **ANTI-GOD**?!
I-I THINK I'M THE ONE WHO BROUGHT ANTI-GOD HERE.
WE FEARED THAT IF WE RETURNED FROM THE PARA-ZONE, HE WOULD RETURN TOO. AND IT SEEMS WE WERE RIGHT TO BE AFRAID.
I HAVE BROUGHT **THAT HORROR** TO YOU. LIKE SO MUCH ELSE... THIS IS ALL MY FAULT.
IF ANTI-GOD HAS FOUND ME, IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL HE RETURNS TO SPIRAL AND FINDS MY FRIENDS. I MUST GET BACK TO THEM. I MUST **WARN THEM!**


AND WHAT ABOUT US?!
THE MOMENT ANTI-GOD ARRIVED, YOU WERE ALL ALREADY DEAD.
BUT, YOU ALL HAVE MY WORD, IF YOU CAN HELP ME FIND A WAY OUT OF THIS PLACE, I WILL TAKE YOU WITH ME.
HOW?
I HAVE A SPACESHIP. THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM.
NO, I MEAN HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO HELP YOU? IF WE HAD A WAY OUT OF HERE, WE WOULD HAVE LEFT LONG AGO.
QUACK!
HMM... GOLDEN GOOSE MAY BE THE EXCEPTION TO THAT RULE, MOONBEAM.
SEE, GOLDEN GOOSE ACTUALLY MADE IT INTO ONE STORY. THE WHOLE TEAM UP WITH SUPER PETS IDEA NEVER GOT DONE, BUT SHE MADE AN APPEARANCE WITH THE GOLDEN FAMILY IN ONE FLASHBACK.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: GOLDEN GOOSE APPEARED IN *BLACK HAMMER SERIES 1 #8!*

QUACK!
WHAT?! WHAT DID SHE SAY?!
GOLDEN GOOSE SAYS THERE **MAY** BE A WAY OUT OF HERE. BUT IT WILL BE **RISKY**.
I HAVE TO TRY. IF I STAY HERE, ANTI-GOD WILL DESTROY US ALL.
THERE WAS NEVER A BATTLE I WOULD HAVE BACKED DOWN FROM. I WILL HELP YOU, COLONEL.
SAME HERE. GOING OUT TRYING SURE BEATS WAITING TO DIE DOWN HERE IN THIS CAVE.
AW, FOR FUCK'S SAKES. THIS IS GONNA GO BALLS UP. I CAN SMELL IT!
I AGREE COMPLETELY, GRIZZLY. BUT WHAT CHOICE DO WE REALLY HAVE? **ONWARD TO GLORY OR DEATH, I SAY!**

QUACK!
UH...YOU GUYS SURE WE SHOULD BE HEADED **THIS WAY?!**
MAYBE IT AIN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA TO LISTEN TO A DUCK, HUH?
SHE SAID GOOSE, NOT DUCK. AND ALSO THAT'S WHERE WE GOTTA GO. THOSE MOUNTAINS RIGHT BEHIND THE BIG GUY.
QUACK!


WE HAVE NO CHOICE NOW! HE'S SEEN US... I ALWAYS WONDERED WHO THOSE HELLAMENTALS WORKED FOR. NOW WE KNOW.

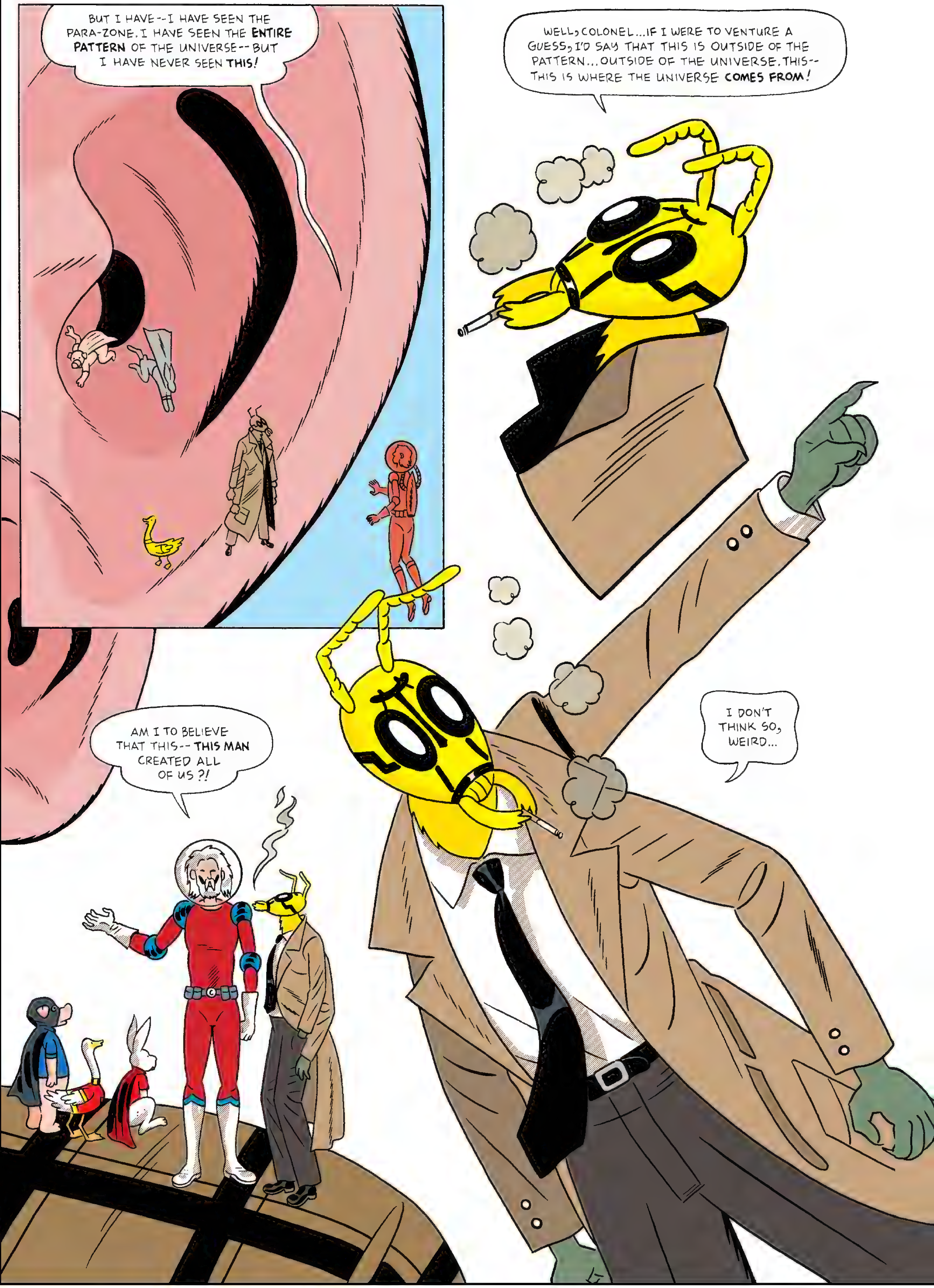
HERE THEY COME!
RUN! DON'T LET THEM--
--TOUCH YOU!
OINK!
ARRRRGHH!!!
GRIZZLY!!!

MERLIN'S BEA-- AARRRGG!!!
THE REST OF YOU, GO! RUN! COMPLETE THE MISSION!
BRAT-AT-AT-AT-AT-AT-AT
INSECTOR! GO WITH THEM! FOLLOW GOLDEN GOOSE!
MOONBEAM?!
GO!

I SURE HOPE GOOSE KNOWS WHERE SHE'S GOING, COLONEL!
I-I HAVE A TERRIBLE FEELING ABOUT ALL THIS.
THIS WAY!
OINK!
HOP! HOP!
QUACK! QUACK! QUACK! QUACK!
DEAD-- THEY'RE ALL DEAD.
I AM SORRY, INSPECTOR--I DID THIS. I BROUGHT HIM HERE.
I MEAN--WE WERE NEVER REALLY ALIVE--BUT WE WEREN'T DEAD, EITHER. AND NOW THEY--THEY JUST **AREN'T ANYTHING**.
I SURE HOPE THIS IS ALL WORTH IT, COLONEL.
IF I CAN GET BACK TO SPIRAL CITY...IF I CAN FIND MY FRIENDS AND WARN THEM... MAYBE I CAN STILL MAKE THIS RIGHT. MAYBE I CAN FIX EVERYTHING.

AND YOU--YOU ARE THE CLOSEST THINGS TO MY FRIENDS THAT EXIST HERE. I-I GUESS YOU ALL GOT TO HAVE YOUR TEAM UP ADVENTURE AFTER ALL, DIDN'T YOU?
OINK! OINK!
QUACK! QUACK!
SHE SAYS, IT AIN'T OVER YET.
DAMN FLOOR IS GETTIN'--
--SLIPPERY!!!
OH, DEAR!
--UNGH.
QUACK!
I-I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS! WHAT IS THIS?!
QUACK!
SHE-SHE SAYS THIS IS THE SOURCE OF ALL OUR STORIES--

--THIS IS THE CREATOR!


BUT I HAVE--I HAVE SEEN THE PARA-ZONE. I HAVE SEEN THE ENTIRE PATTERN OF THE UNIVERSE--BUT I HAVE NEVER SEEN THIS!
WELL, COLONEL...IF I WERE TO VENTURE A GUESS, I'D SAY THAT THIS IS OUTSIDE OF THE PATTERN...OUTSIDE OF THE UNIVERSE. THIS--THIS IS WHERE THE UNIVERSE COMES FROM!
AM I TO BELIEVE THAT THIS-- THIS MAN CREATED ALL OF US?!
I DON'T THINK SO, WEIRD...

THIS PLACE MAY BE WHERE STORIES COME FROM, BUT THIS GUY ISN'T THE ONLY CREATOR...
THIS IS THE SOURCE OF ALL STORIES. OURS IS ONLY A TINY PART OF THAT.

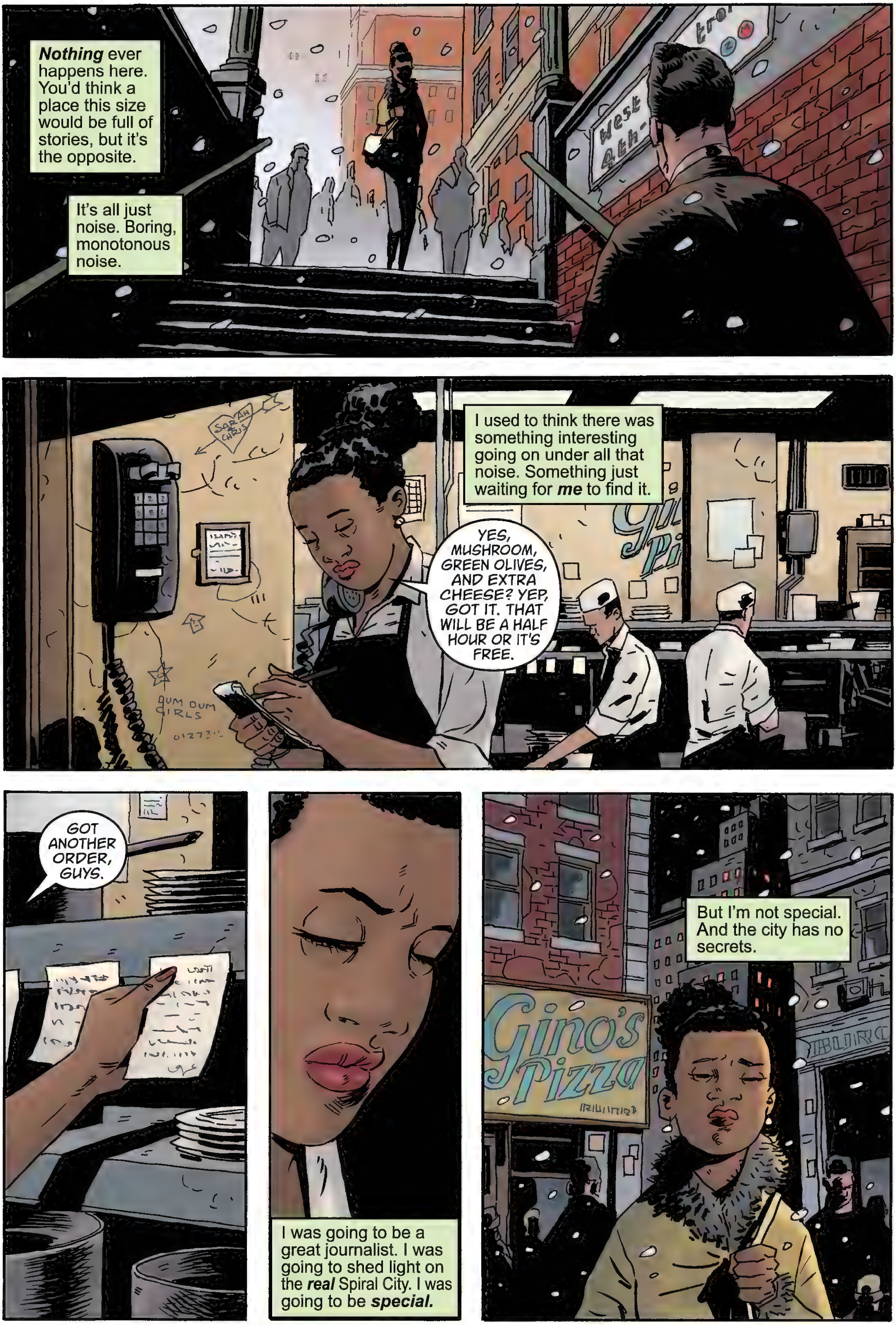
THIS PLACE--WHY DID YOU BRING ME HERE, GOLDEN GOOSE?
QUACK! QUACK! QUACK!
SHE SAID, TO REMIND YOU.
REMIND ME? OF WHAT?
QUACK! QUACK! QUACK!
THAT STORIES ARE **NEVER OVER**. THAT THERE CAN ALWAYS BE **NEW ONES**. EVEN FOR **YOU**, COLONEL.
BUT HOW DO I GET BACK? HOW DO I GET BACK TO MY UNIVERSE? TO MY FRIENDS?
QUACK!
I'D SAY YOUR FRIENDS ARE **UP THERE**.

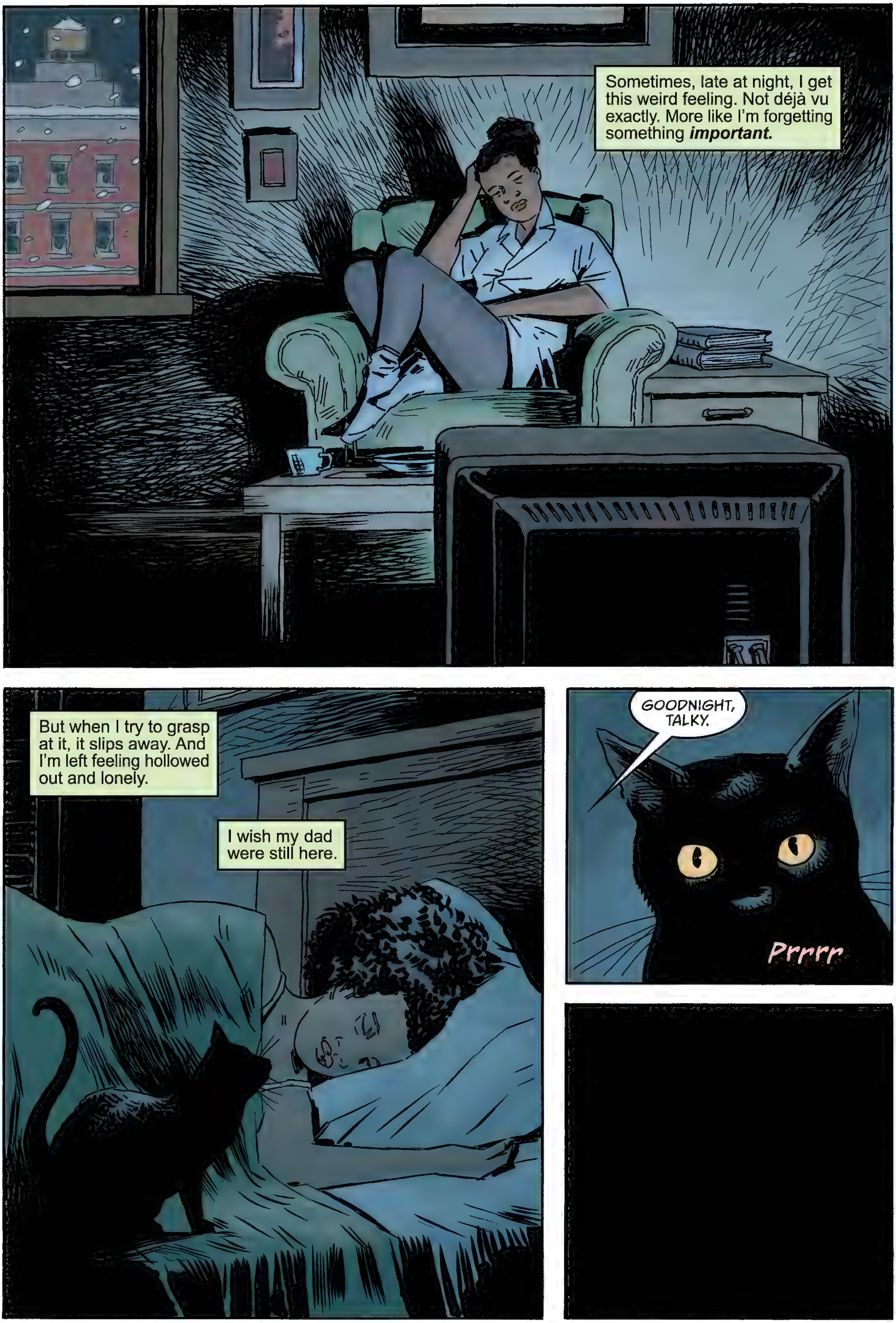
WILL YOU COME WITH ME?
YOU KNOW...WE NEVER REALLY FIT HERE. MAYBE WE'LL TRY SOMEWHERE ELSE. LOTS OF STORIES TO CHOOSE FROM. ONE OF 'EM HAS TO BE A FIT.
GOODBYE. AND THANK YOU.

OINK!
GOOD LUCK, COLONEL. I HOPE YOU FIND YOUR FRIENDS. I HOPE YOU FIND YOUR WAY BACK TO SPIRAL CITY.
SO DO I, INSPECTOR. GOLDEN GOOSE WAS RIGHT. OUR STORY MAY HAVE **CHANGED**, BUT IS NOT FINISHED YET...
I KNOW THEY ARE OUT THERE **SOMEWHERE**.
SOMEWHERE...
NEXT: THE FATES OF GAIL, ABE, LUCY, AND BARBALIEN REVEALED IN... **THE REBOOT!**

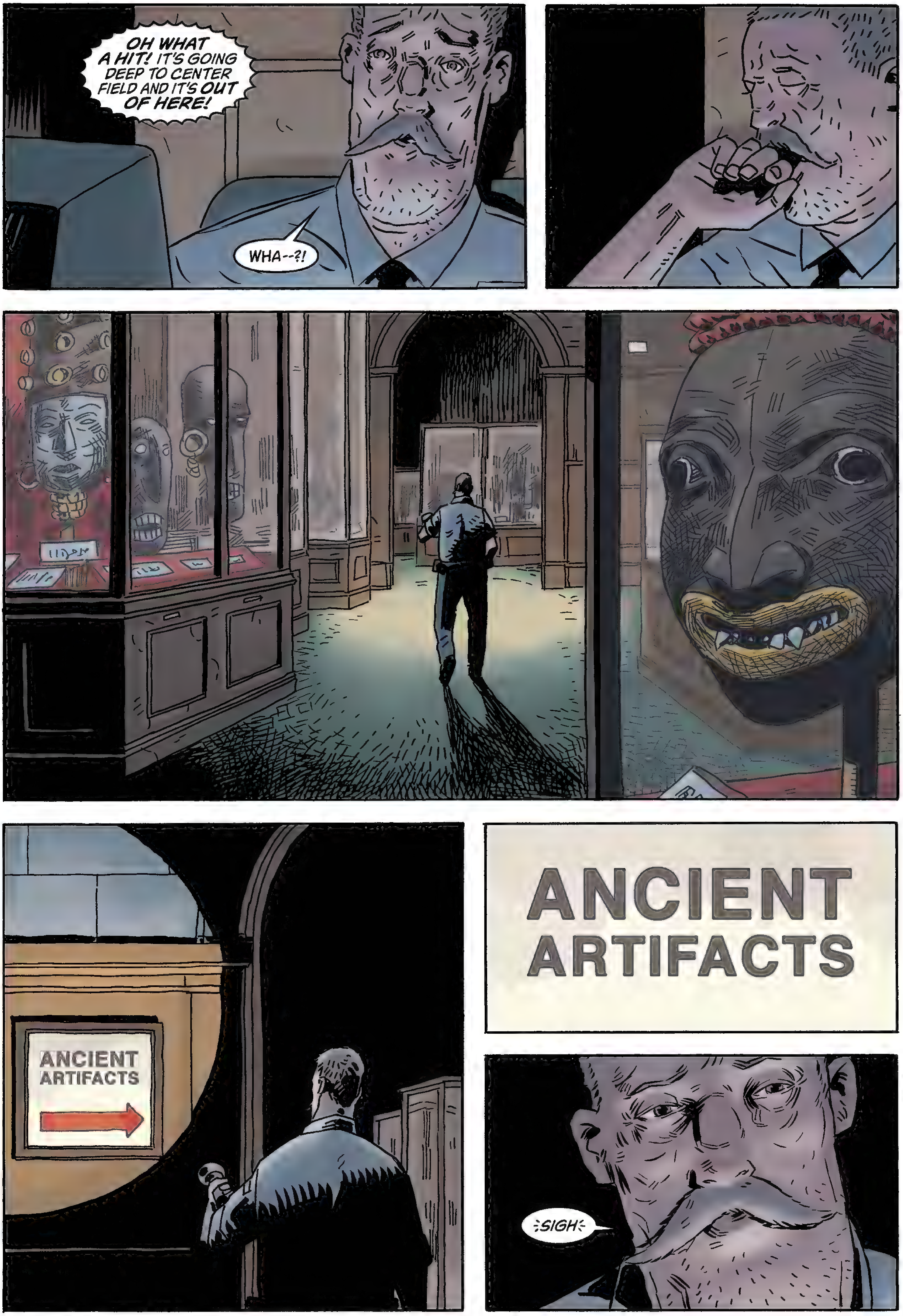
IND.
12¢
STORIES TO
ASTONISH
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
DH
42
APR.
Featuring
PUNCH
SOCKLINGHAM

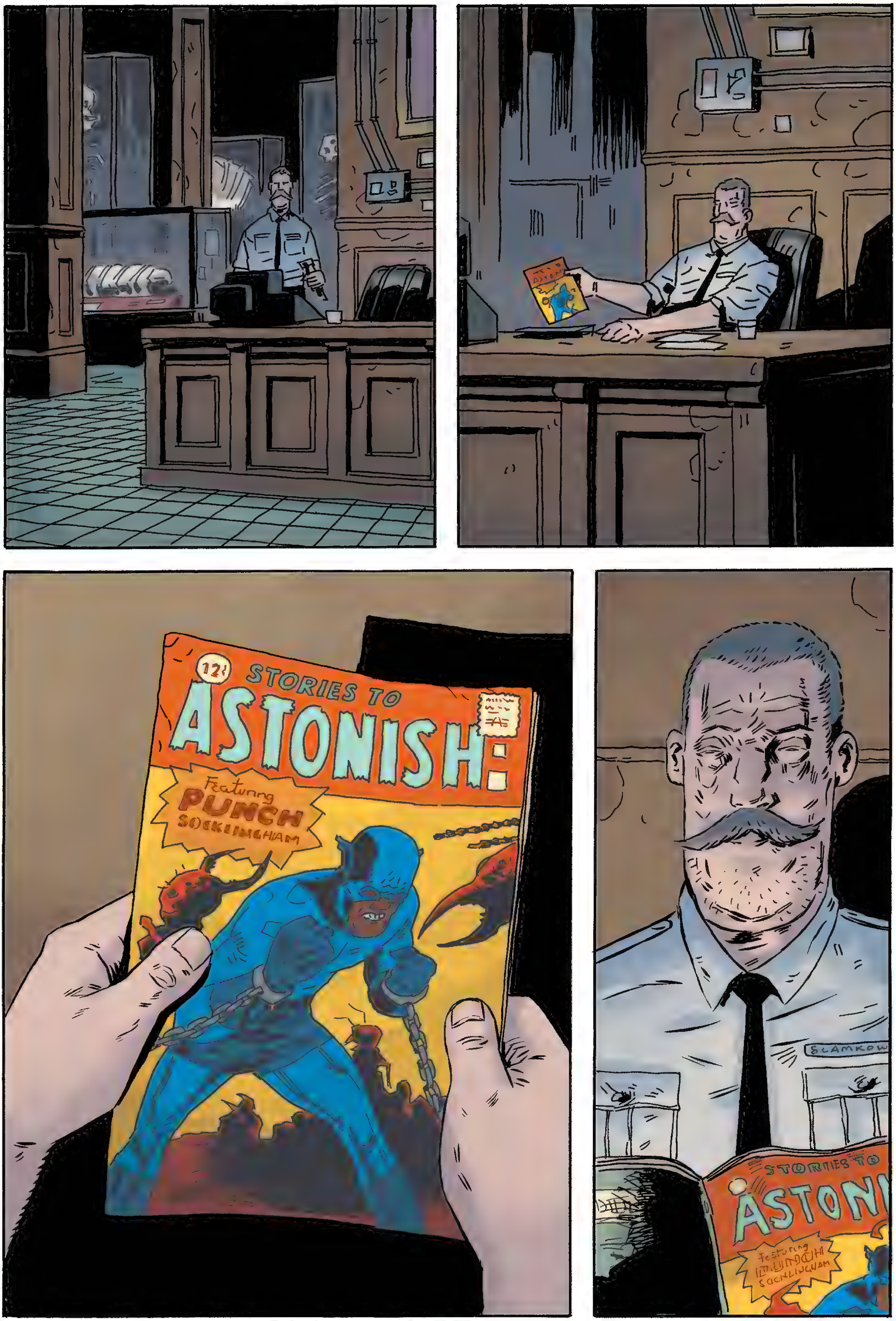
UNGH. GO AWAY.
I STILL HAD *THREE MINUTES.*
Prrrr
Just another day in Spiral City.
Another *boring ass* day.


Nothing ever happens here. You'd think a place this size would be full of stories, but it's the opposite.
It's all just noise. Boring, monotonous noise.
West 4th-
SARAH CHRIS
I used to think there was something interesting going on under all that noise. Something just waiting for ***me*** to find it.
YES, MUSHROOM, GREEN OLIVES, AND EXTRA CHEESE? YEP, GOT IT. THAT WILL BE A HALF HOUR OR IT'S FREE.
DUM DUM GIRLS
GOT ANOTHER ORDER, GUYS.
I was going to be a great journalist. I was going to shed light on the ***real*** Spiral City. I was going to be ***special.***
Gino's Pizza
But I'm not special. And the city has no secrets.

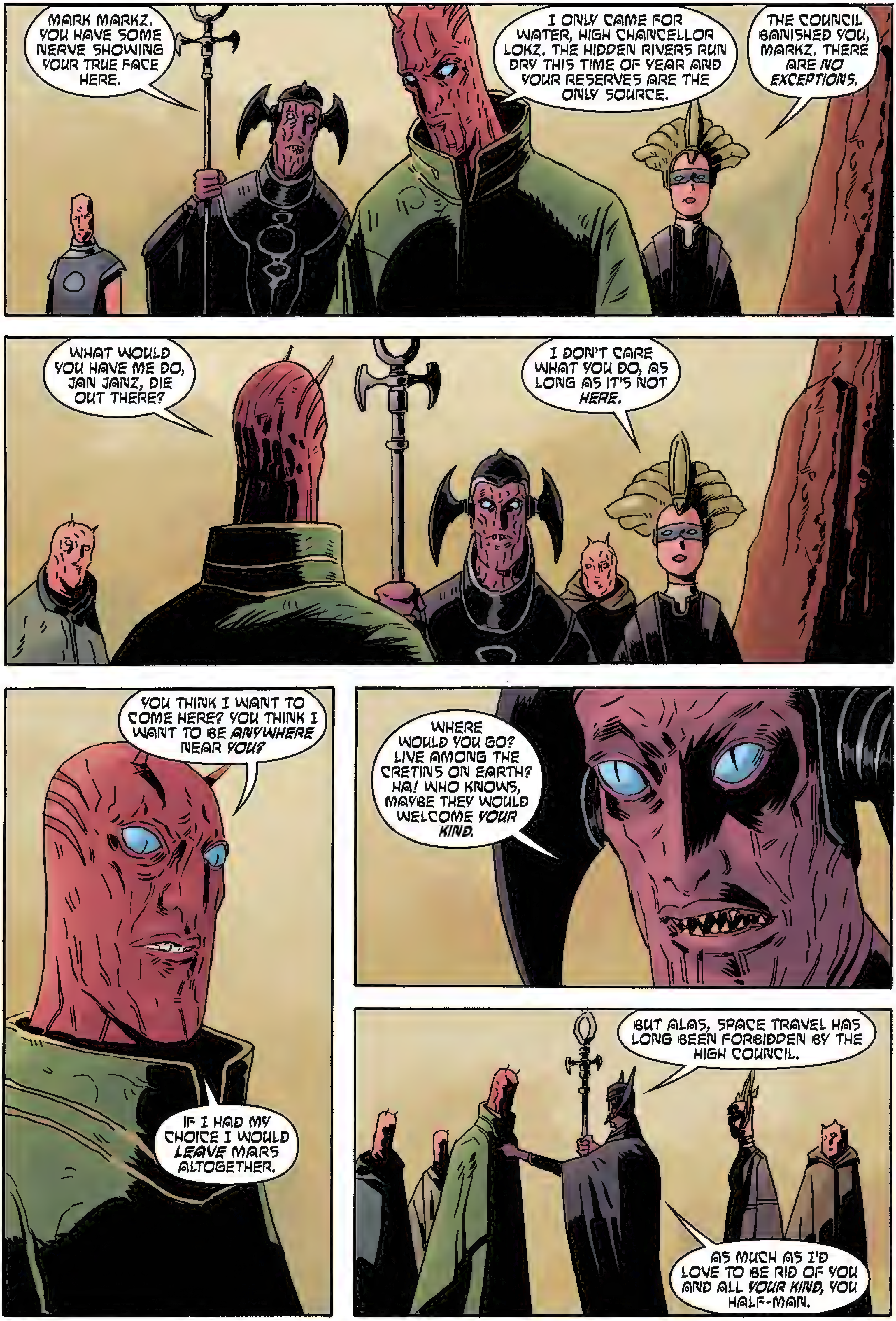

Sometimes, late at night, I get this weird feeling. Not déjà vu exactly. More like I'm forgetting something ***important.***
But when I try to grasp at it, it slips away. And I'm left feeling hollowed out and lonely.
I wish my dad were still here.
GOODNIGHT, TALKY.
Prrrr

SPIRAL CITY MUSEUM
THE BASES ARE NOW LOADED AND SET UP FOR SPIRAL CITY'S **PREMIER** SLUGGER, **TEX ABBOT**.
ABBOT GETS SET AND THE PITCH IS INSIDE FOR BALL ONE.
SLAMKOWSKI
ZZZZZZZZ
AND HERE'S THE NEXT PITCH--
SLAMKOW

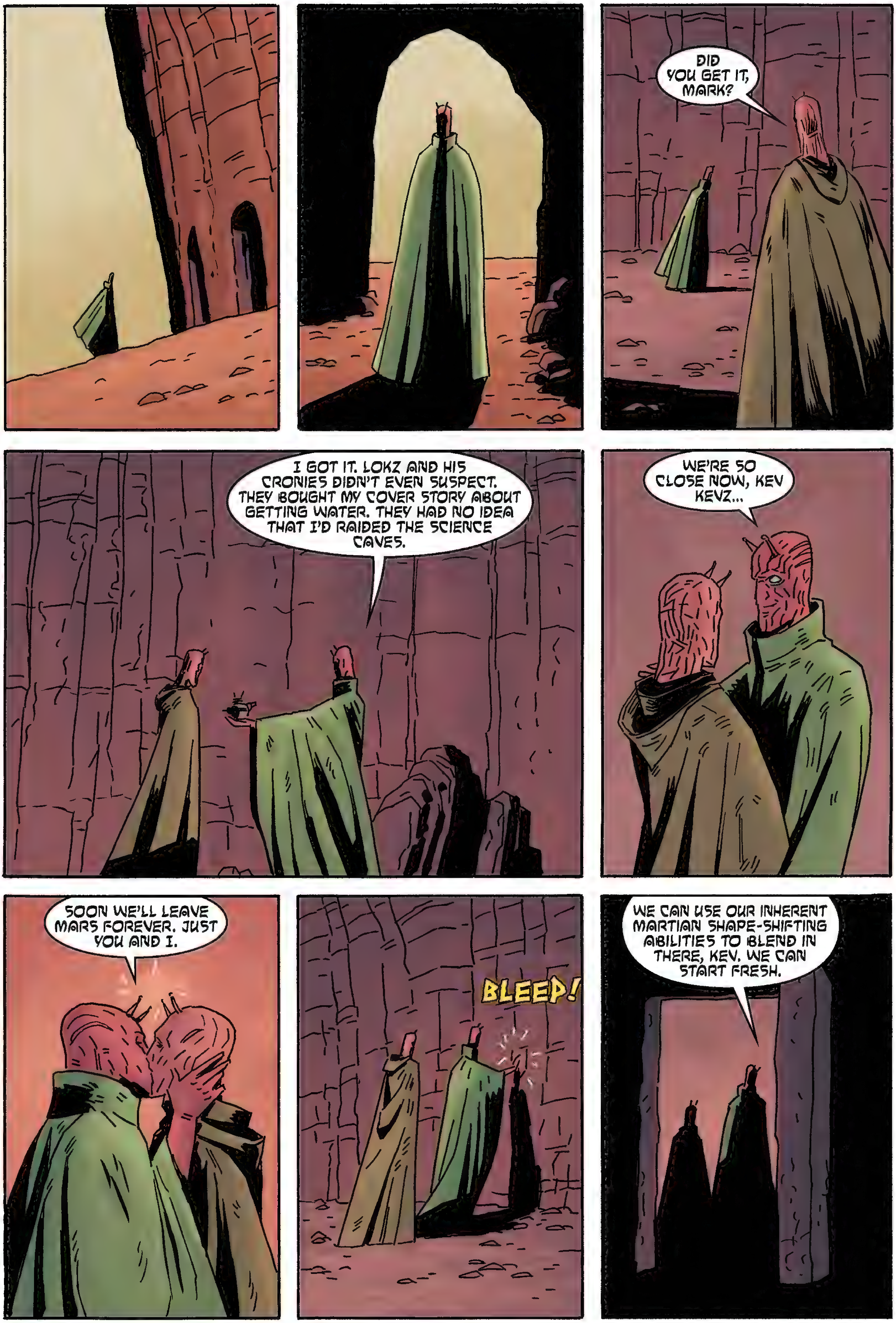

OH WHAT A HIT! IT'S GOING DEEP TO CENTER FIELD AND IT'S OUT OF HERE!
WHA--?!
ANCIENT ARTIFACTS
ANCIENT ARTIFACTS
SIGH


12¢
STORIES TO
ASTONISH!
Featuring
PUNCH
SOCKLINGHAM
SLAMKOW
STORIES TO
ASTONI
Featuring
PUNCH
SOCKLINGHAM

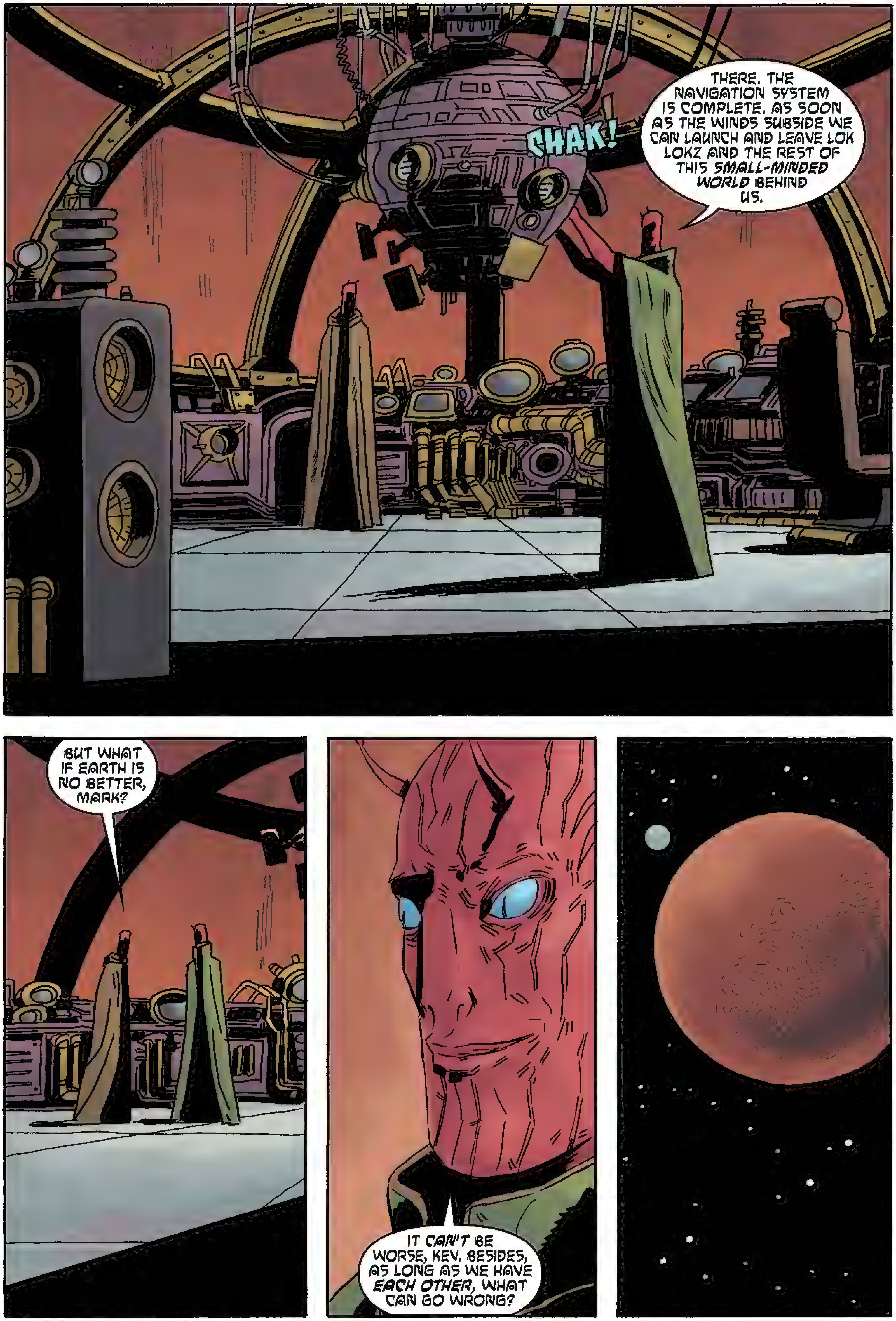
THAT'S HIM, THAT'S THE FORNICATOR.
WHAT'S A *FORNICATOR*, PAM PAMZ?
IT MEANS HE'S A *PERVERT*, DAN DANZ.


MARK MARKZ. YOU HAVE SOME NERVE SHOWING YOUR TRUE FACE HERE.
I ONLY CAME FOR WATER, HIGH CHANCELLOR LOKZ. THE HIDDEN RIVERS RUN DRY THIS TIME OF YEAR AND YOUR RESERVES ARE THE ONLY SOURCE.
THE COUNCIL BANISHED YOU, MARKZ. THERE ARE *NO EXCEPTIONS*.
WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME DO, JAN JANZ, DIE OUT THERE?
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU DO, AS LONG AS IT'S NOT *HERE*.
YOU THINK I WANT TO COME HERE? YOU THINK I WANT TO BE *ANYWHERE* NEAR *YOU?*
IF I HAD MY CHOICE I WOULD *LEAVE* MARS ALTOGETHER.
WHERE WOULD YOU GO? LIVE AMONG THE CRETINS ON EARTH? HA! WHO KNOWS, MAYBE THEY WOULD WELCOME *YOUR KIND*.
BUT ALAS, SPACE TRAVEL HAS LONG BEEN FORBIDDEN BY THE HIGH COUNCIL.
AS MUCH AS I'D LOVE TO BE RID OF YOU AND ALL *YOUR KIND*, YOU HALF-MAN.

TOUCH ME AGAIN AND WE SHALL SEE WHO THE *REAL* MAN IS, LOKZ.
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.

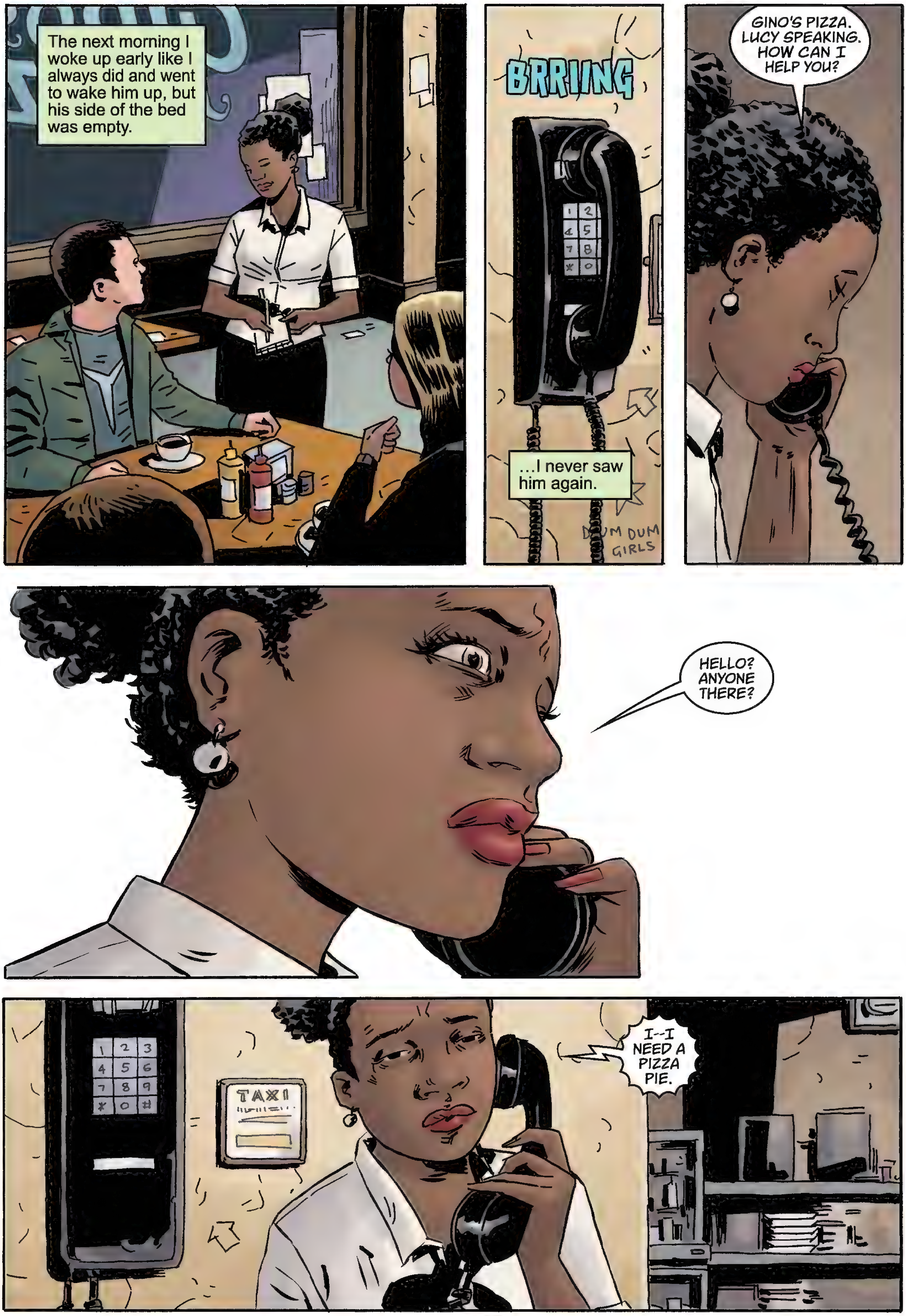

DID YOU GET IT, MARK?
I GOT IT. LOKZ AND HIS CRONIES DIDN'T EVEN SUSPECT. THEY BOUGHT MY COVER STORY ABOUT GETTING WATER. THEY HAD NO IDEA THAT I'D RAIDED THE SCIENCE CAVES.
WE'RE SO CLOSE NOW, KEV KEVZ...
SOON WE'LL LEAVE MARS FOREVER. JUST YOU AND I.
BLEEP!
WE CAN USE OUR INHERENT MARTIAN SHAPE-SHIFTING ABILITIES TO BLEND IN THERE, KEV. WE CAN START FRESH.

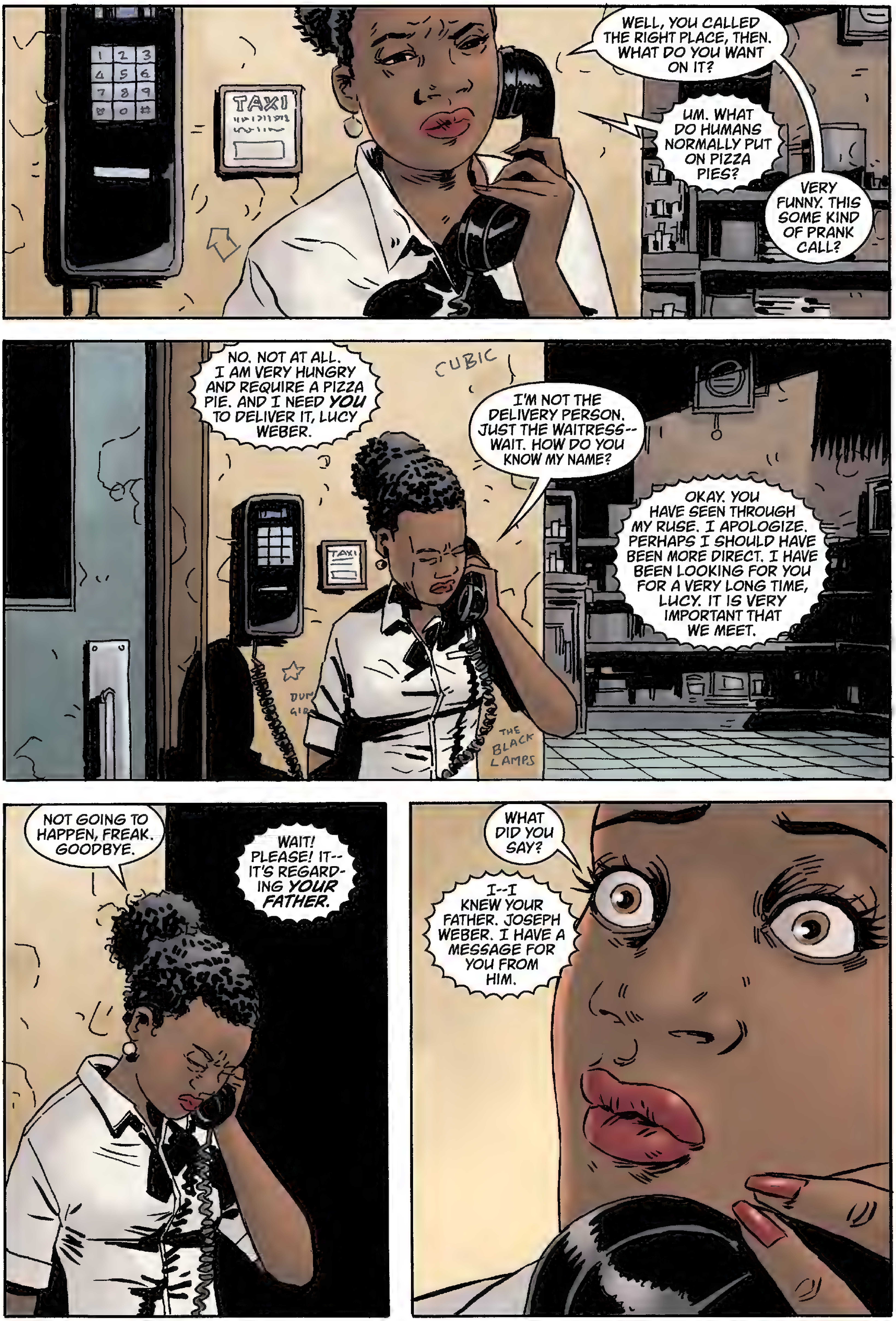
ARE YOU SURE? THEY DIDN'T SEE YOU TAKE IT?
NO, NO... THOSE FOOLS ARE BLINDED BY THEIR OWN IGNORANCE AND HATRED. YOU NEED TO STOP WORRYING. WE'RE SO CLOSE NOW. *NOTHING* CAN STOP US, KEV.


CHAK!
THERE. THE NAVIGATION SYSTEM IS COMPLETE. AS SOON AS THE WINDS SUBSIDE WE CAN LAUNCH AND LEAVE LOK LOKZ AND THE REST OF THIS *SMALL-MINDED WORLD* BEHIND US.
BUT WHAT IF EARTH IS NO BETTER, MARK?
IT *CAN'T* BE WORSE, KEV. BESIDES, AS LONG AS WE HAVE *EACH OTHER*, WHAT CAN GO WRONG?

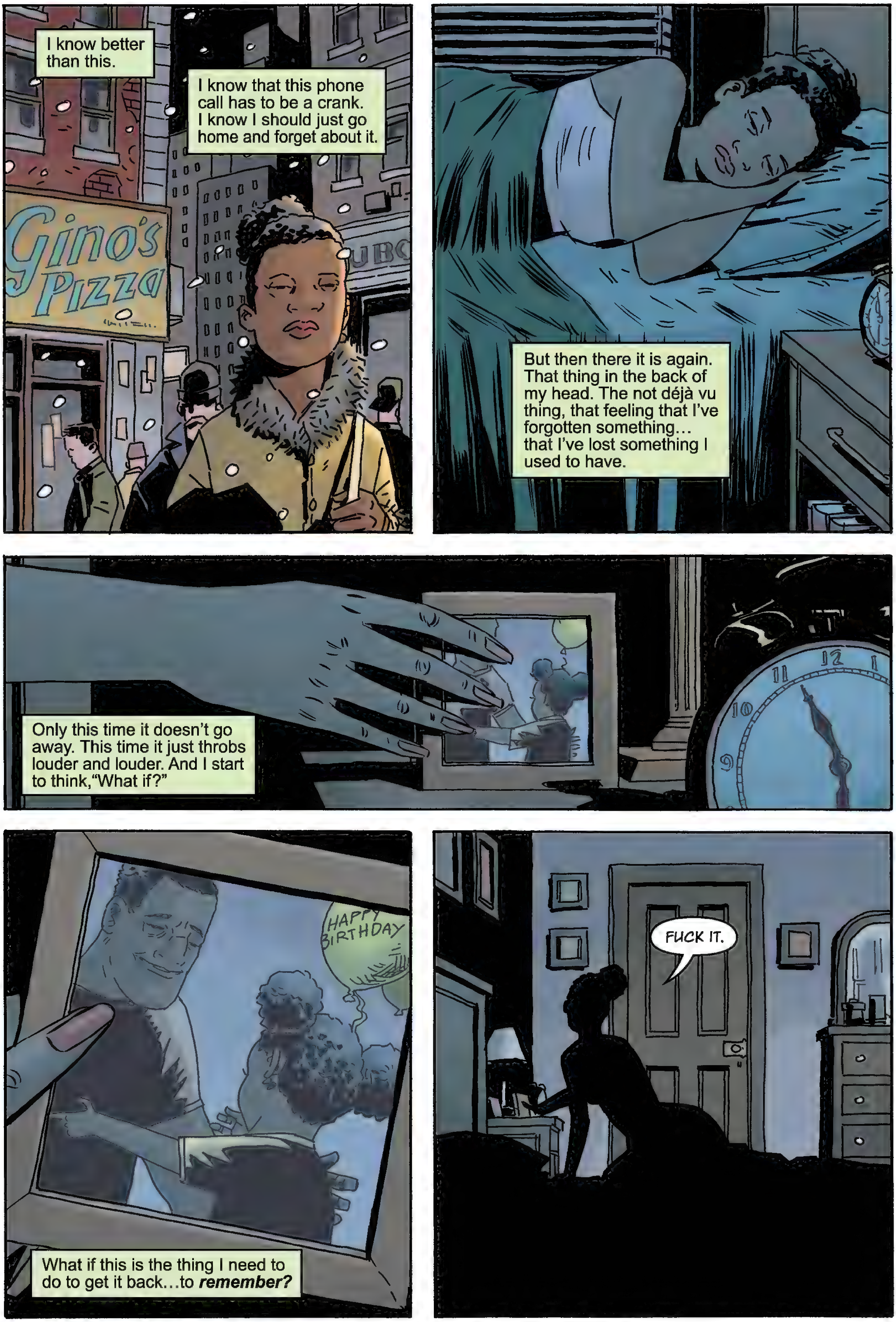
I can barely face the thought of getting out of bed. I used to *love* Saturday mornings. But now…
WELCOME TO SPIRAL CITY
t Spiral c
My dad was a cop. And he had it worked out so that he had every Saturday off. So, when I was a little girl, I'd sneak into his and mom's room really early on Saturdays and shake him awake.
He used to pretend to be grumpy, but then he'd smile and quietly sneak out of bed so as not to wake up mom. Then we'd sneak out of the apartment and go on one of our ***weekend adventures.***
It was just me and him and we'd pretend I was his partner and we were ace detectives.

It was silly, really, but we'd go get a greasy breakfast and come up with an imaginary crime we could solve that day.
Then we'd spend the weekend finding "clues."
Those are some of my favorite memories. Hell, maybe those are my *only* good memories.
When I turned thirteen my dad was killed. He was a downtown cop and he responded to a domestic abuse call late one Friday night…

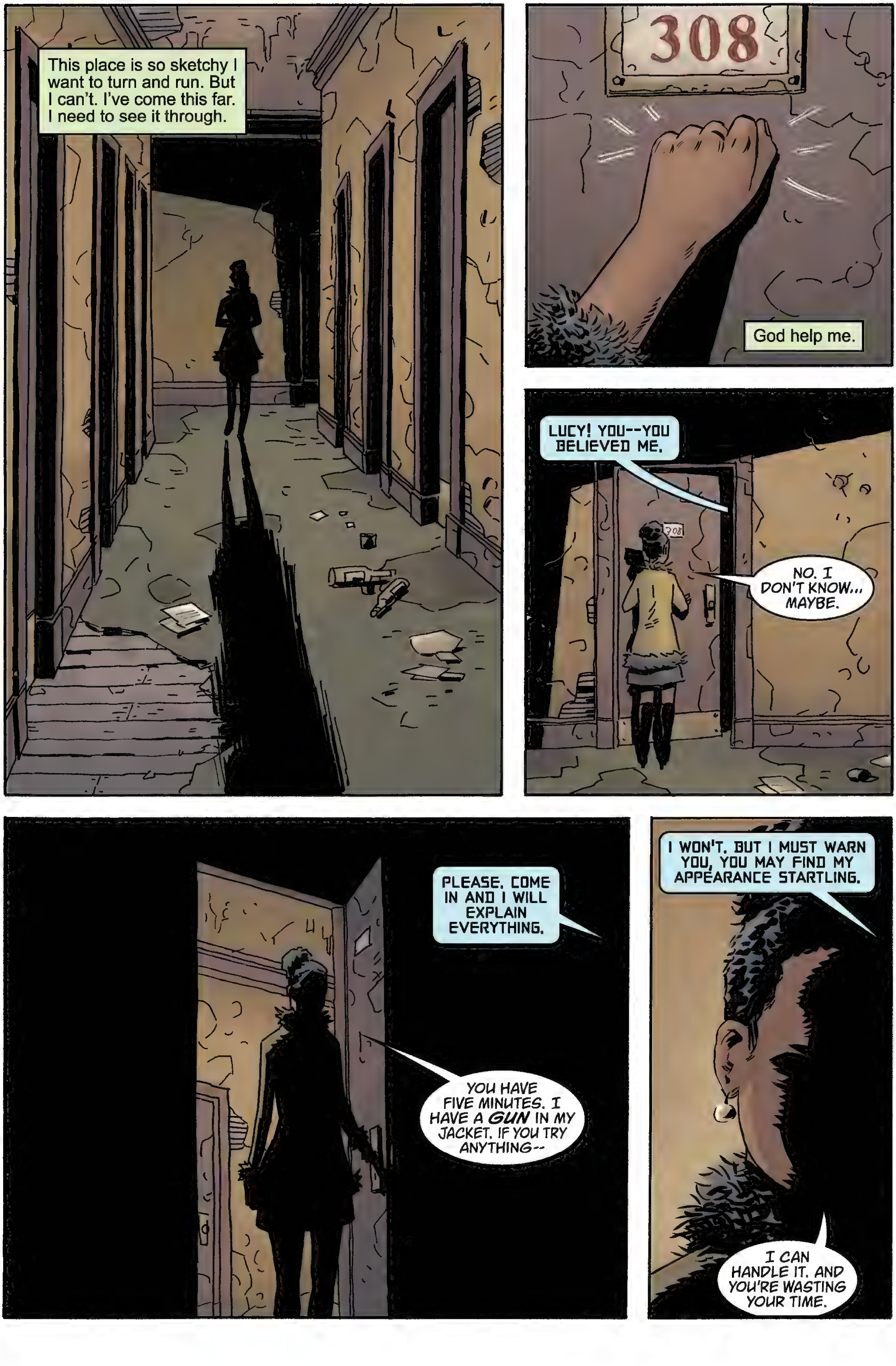

The next morning I woke up early like I always did and went to wake him up, but his side of the bed was empty.
BRRIING
...I never saw him again.
DUM DUM GIRLS
GINO'S PIZZA. LUCY SPEAKING. HOW CAN I HELP YOU?
HELLO? ANYONE THERE?
TAXI
I--I NEED A PIZZA PIE.


WELL, YOU CALLED THE RIGHT PLACE, THEN. WHAT DO YOU WANT ON IT?
TAXI
UM. WHAT DO HUMANS NORMALLY PUT ON PIZZA PIES?
VERY FUNNY. THIS SOME KIND OF PRANK CALL?
NO. NOT AT ALL. I AM VERY HUNGRY AND REQUIRE A PIZZA PIE. AND I NEED *YOU* TO DELIVER IT, LUCY WEBER.
CUBIC
I'M NOT THE DELIVERY PERSON. JUST THE WAITRESS-- WAIT. HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
TAXI
OKAY. YOU HAVE SEEN THROUGH MY RUSE. I APOLOGIZE. PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE DIRECT. I HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU FOR A VERY LONG TIME, LUCY. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE MEET.
DUM GIR
THE BLACK LAMPS
NOT GOING TO HAPPEN, FREAK. GOODBYE.
WAIT! PLEASE! IT-- IT'S REGARDING ***YOUR FATHER.***
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
I--I KNEW YOUR FATHER. JOSEPH WEBER. I HAVE A MESSAGE FOR YOU FROM HIM.

I-- WHOEVER YOU ARE, THIS ISN'T FUNNY!
I AM NOT TRYING TO BE FUNNY. I AM TRYING TO HELP YOU. THERE IS NOTHING I CAN SAY TO CONVINCE YOU, OTHER THAN I KNEW YOUR FATHER AND I WAS--I WAS THERE **WHEN HE DIED.**
TAXI
...
OKAY. I'LL GIVE YOU FIVE MINUTES. BUT IN **A PUBLIC PLACE.** SOMEWHERE WITH LOTS OF PEOPLE AROUND.
THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE. MY--MY CONDITION MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO GO OUTSIDE.
RIGHT. OF COURSE IT DOES. THIS IS SOME MESSED UP PERVERT SHIT, MISTER.
I AM NO PERVERT AND I AM NO **MISTER.** I HAVE SAID ALL I CAN OVER THE PHONE. I AM AT 181 CARLAW AVENUE, APARTMENT 308. THE CHOICE IS YOURS. BUT I TRULY HOPE YOU DECIDE TO COME, LUCY. WHAT I HAVE TO TELL YOU WILL **CHANGE YOUR LIFE.**
CLICK
HELLO?
What was that I said about there being ***no secrets*** in Spiral City?


I know better than this.
I know that this phone call has to be a crank. I know I should just go home and forget about it.
Gino's Pizza
But then there it is again. That thing in the back of my head. The not déjà vu thing, that feeling that I've forgotten something… that I've lost something I used to have.
Only this time it doesn't go away. This time it just throbs louder and louder. And I start to think, "What if?"
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
What if this is the thing I need to do to get it back…to *remember?*
FUCK IT.

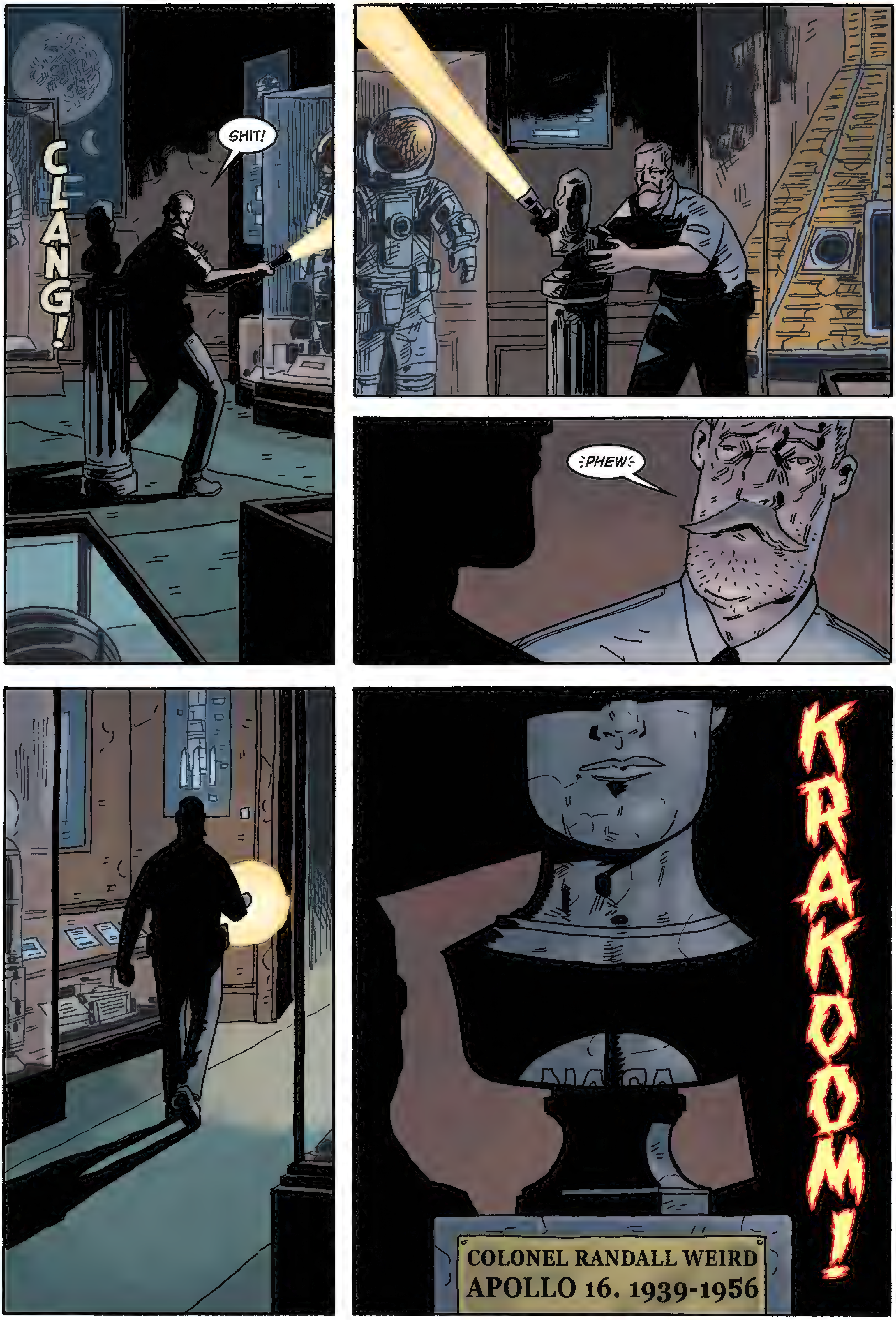
the BLACK LAMPS
This was a bad idea.


This place is so sketchy I want to turn and run. But I can't. I've come this far. I need to see it through.
308
God help me.
LUCY! YOU--YOU BELIEVED ME.
308
NO. I DON'T KNOW... MAYBE.
PLEASE. COME IN AND I WILL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING.
YOU HAVE FIVE MINUTES. I HAVE A *GUN* IN MY JACKET. IF YOU TRY ANYTHING--
I WON'T. BUT I MUST WARN YOU, YOU MAY FIND MY APPEARANCE STARTLING.
I CAN HANDLE IT. AND YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME.

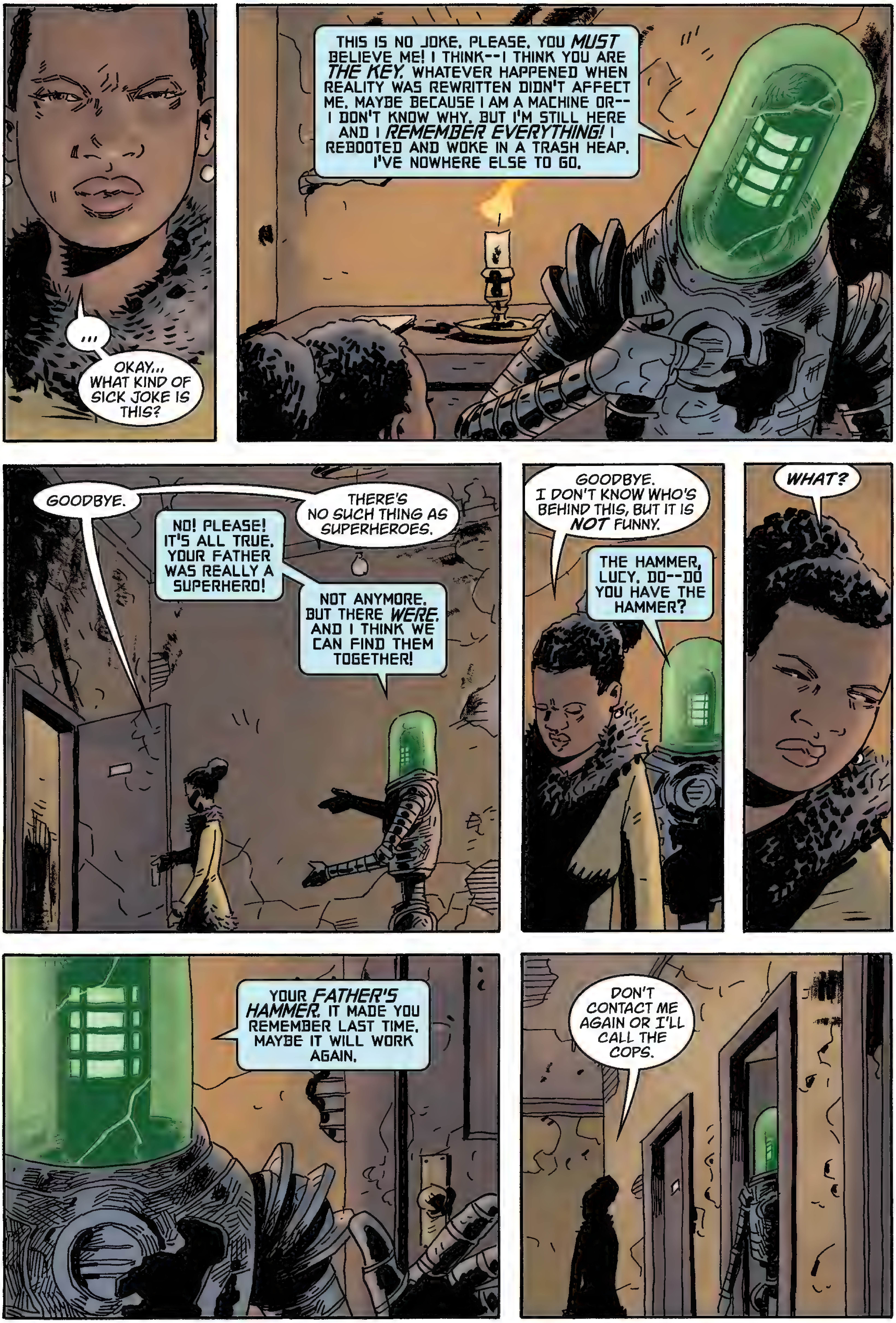
sssKRiiiit
HELLO, LUCY. IT IS ME...IT IS TALKY-WALKY, AND WE NEED TO FIND THE OTHERS BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!
HOLY FUCK!

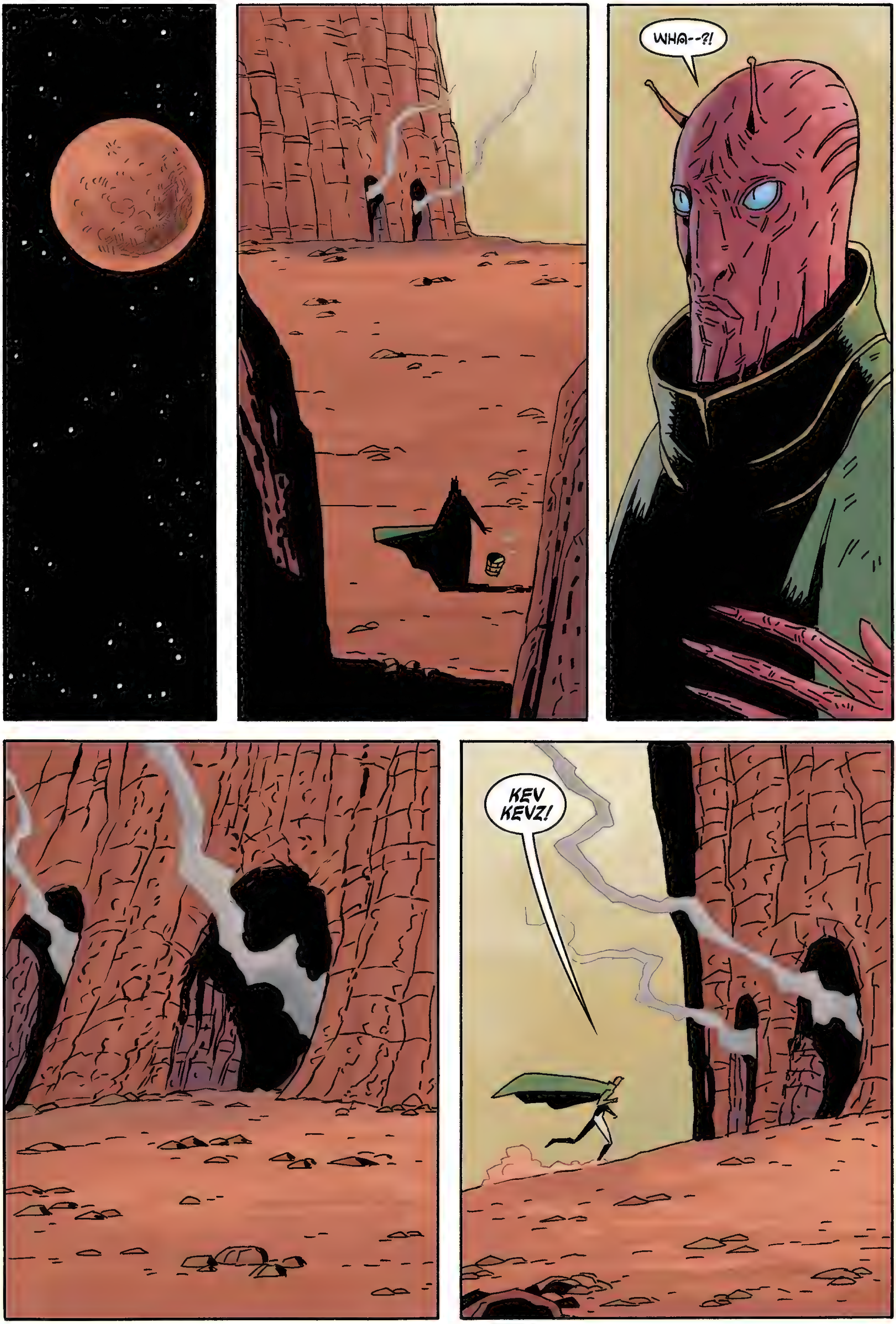
EXTRA
SPACE RACE
EXCLUSIVE
WEIRD IN ORBIT!
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

KRA-KOOM!
L CITY MUSEUM

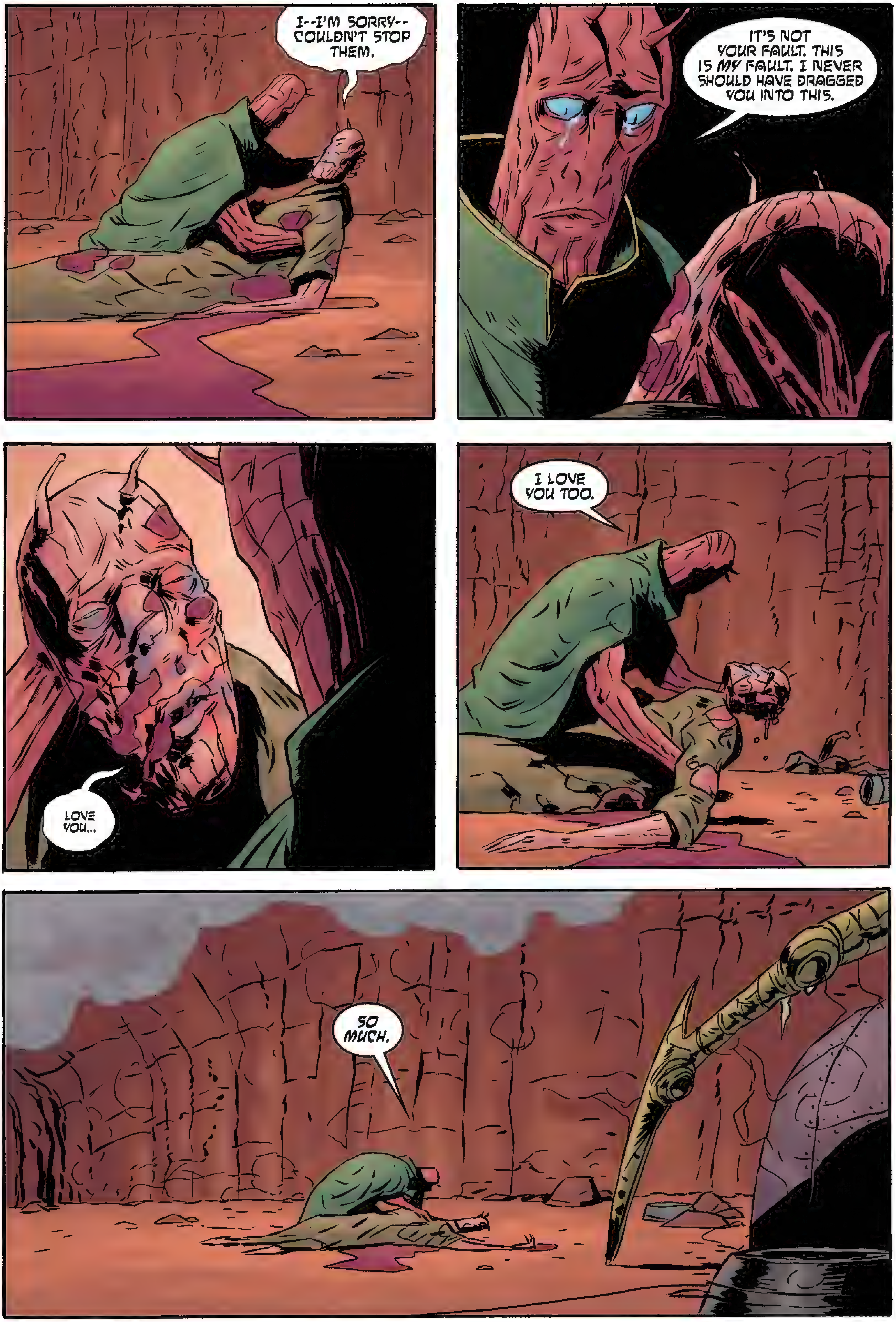

CLANG!
SHIT!
PHEW
KRAKOOM!
COLONEL RANDALL WEIRD
APOLLO 16. 1939-1956

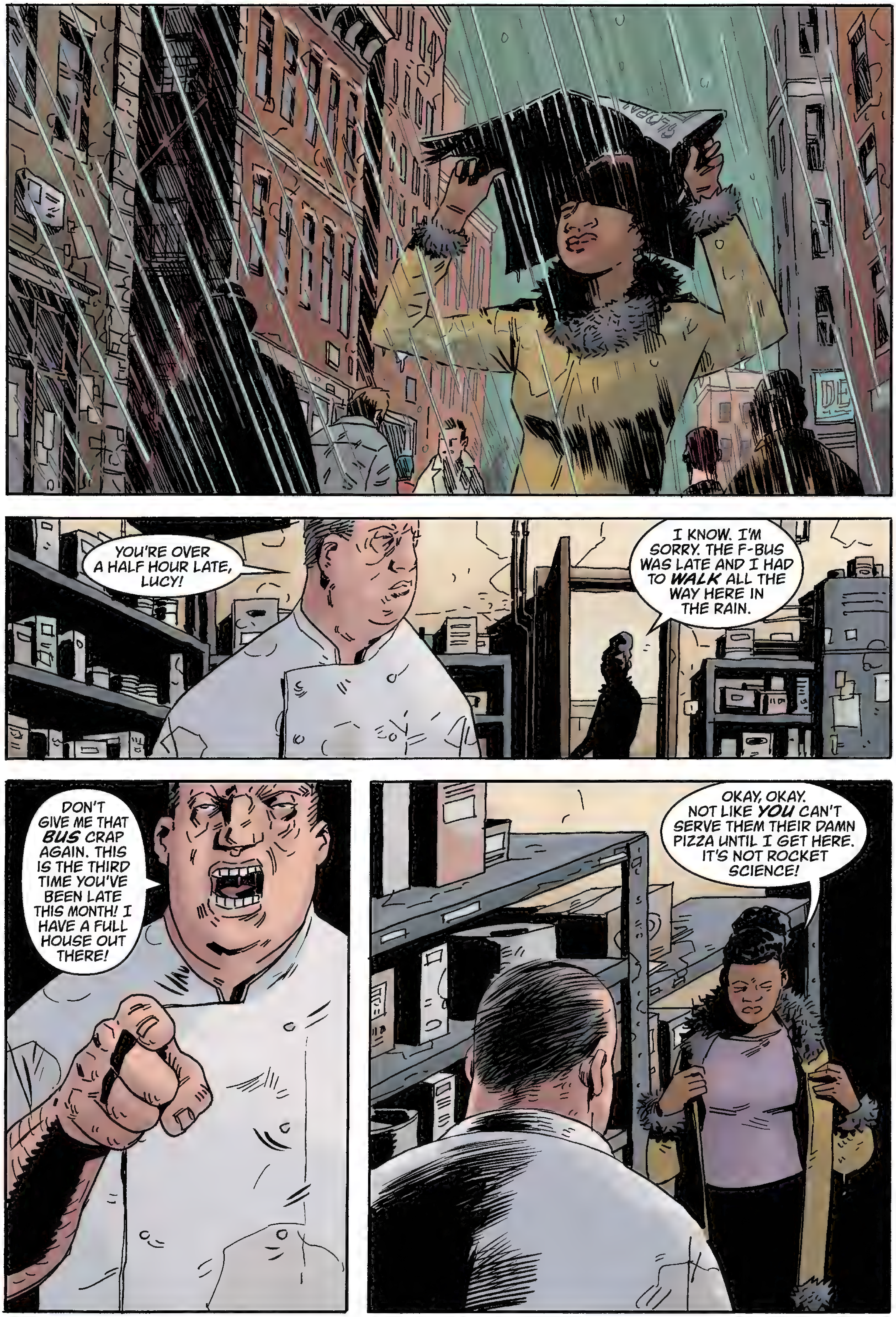
WH-WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?! HOW ARE YOU-- WHO'S DOING THIS? WHO'S *CONTROLLING* YOU? IS-- IS THERE SOMEONE INSIDE THERE?
NO ONE IS CONTROLLING ME. YOU NEED TO LISTEN TO ME, LUCY. I--I DON'T KNOW HOW ELSE TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAS HAPPENED, SO I AM JUST GOING TO LAY IT OUT FOR YOU...
I AM--I WAS PART OF A GROUP OF SUPERHEROES WHO HELPED TO SAVE THE WORLD. YOUR FATHER, JOSEPH WEBER, WAS THE GREATEST OF US ALL. HE WAS CALLED *BLACK HAMMER.*
THEN WE ALL DISAPPEARED. WE WERE ON A FARM. BUT IT *WASN'T* A FARM. IT WAS JUST AN ILLUSTION FED TO US BY MADAME DRAGONFLY, A MYSTIC, TO PACIFY US.
THEN *YOU* FOUND US, LUCY! I--MY A.I. BROKE FREE FROM WHATEVER DRAGONFLY HAD DONE AND I USED SCRAP PARTS OF COLONEL WEIRD'S SHIP TO BUILD PROBES. YOU FOUND ONE OF THOSE PROBES AND IT LED YOU TO US.
WE DISCOVERED THE TRUTH. OUR BODIES HAD ACTUALLY BEEN INSIDE THE COLONEL'S SHIP THE ENTIRE TIME. AND THEN WE RETURNED TO THIS DIMENSION AND *SOMETHING HAPPENED.*
REALITY WAS WIPED OUT AND REWRITTEN. THERE WERE NEVER ANY SUPERHEROES. YOUR FATHER WAS NEVER BLACK HAMMER. AND YOU...YOU DON'T REMEMBER ANY OF IT, DO YOU?

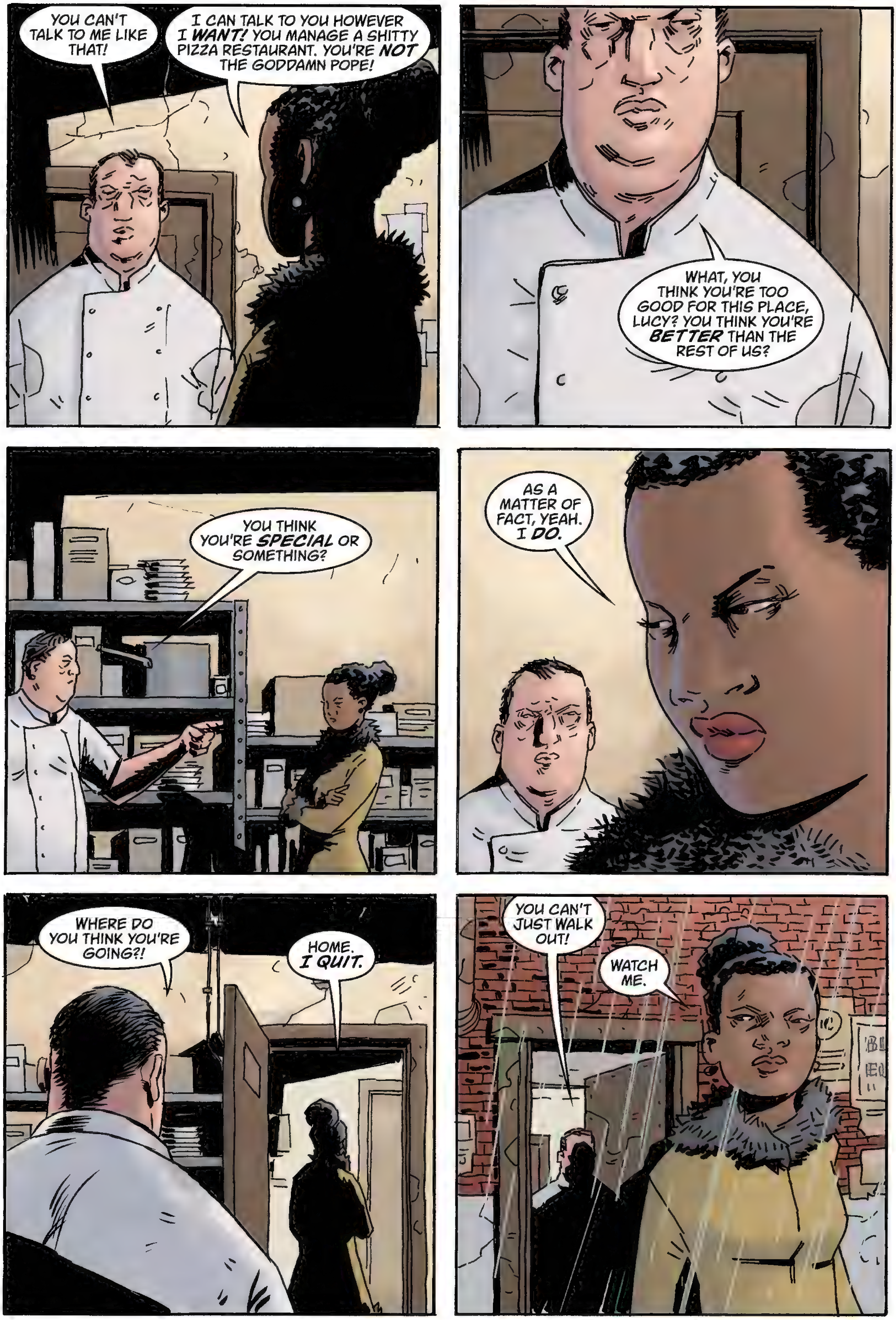

...
OKAY... WHAT KIND OF SICK JOKE IS THIS?
THIS IS NO JOKE. PLEASE. YOU *MUST* BELIEVE ME! I THINK--I THINK YOU ARE *THE KEY.* WHATEVER HAPPENED WHEN REALITY WAS REWRITTEN DIDN'T AFFECT ME. MAYBE BECAUSE I AM A MACHINE OR-- I DON'T KNOW WHY. BUT I'M STILL HERE AND I *REMEMBER EVERYTHING!* I REBOOTED AND WOKE IN A TRASH HEAP. I'VE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS SUPERHEROES.
NO! PLEASE! IT'S ALL TRUE. YOUR FATHER WAS REALLY A SUPERHERO!
GOODBYE.
NOT ANYMORE. BUT THERE *WERE.* AND I THINK WE CAN FIND THEM TOGETHER!
GOODBYE. I DON'T KNOW WHO'S BEHIND THIS, BUT IT IS *NOT* FUNNY.
THE HAMMER, LUCY. DO--DO YOU HAVE THE HAMMER?
WHAT?
YOUR *FATHER'S HAMMER.* IT MADE YOU REMEMBER LAST TIME. MAYBE IT WILL WORK AGAIN.
DON'T CONTACT ME AGAIN OR I'LL CALL THE COPS.

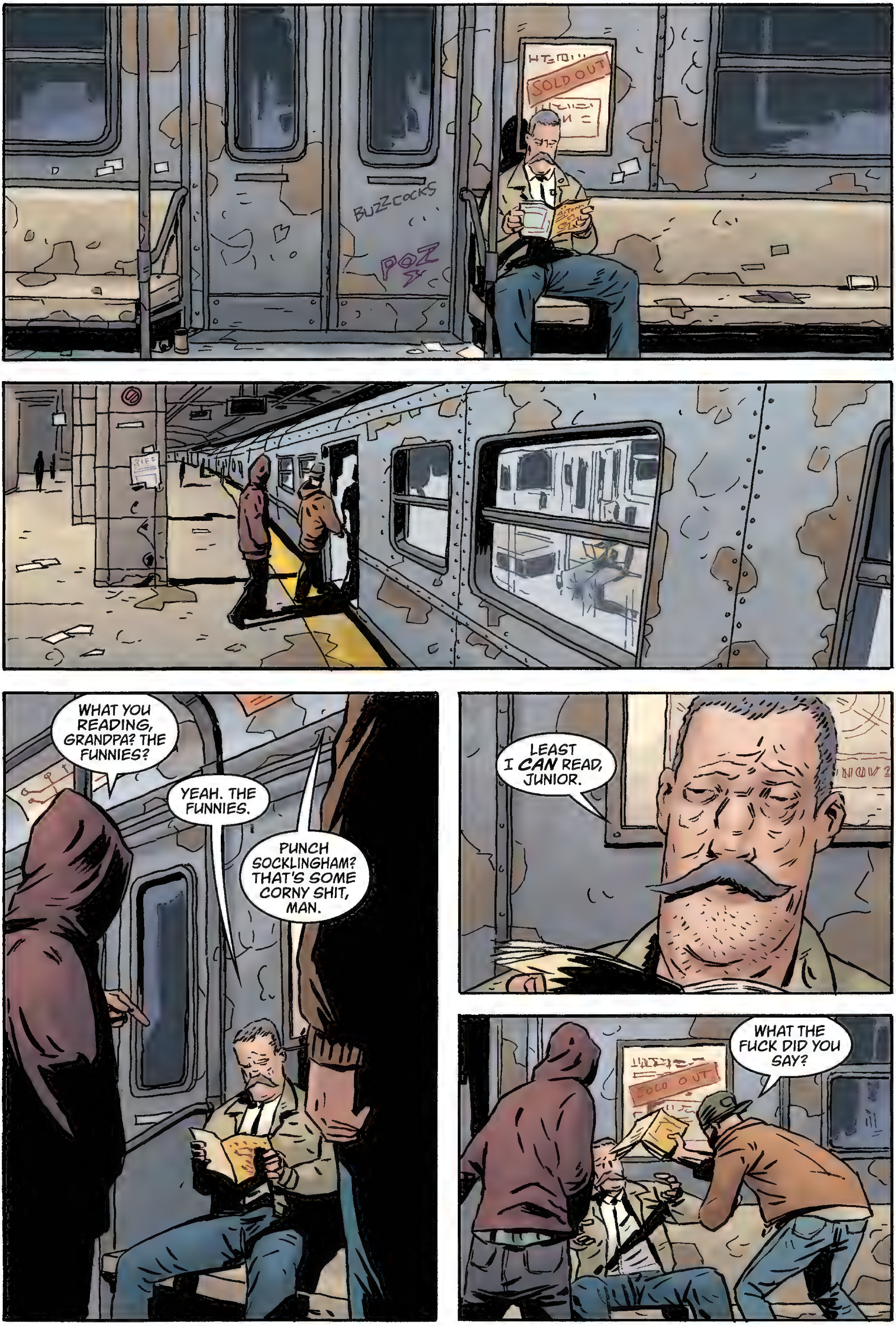

WHA--?!
KEV KEVZ!

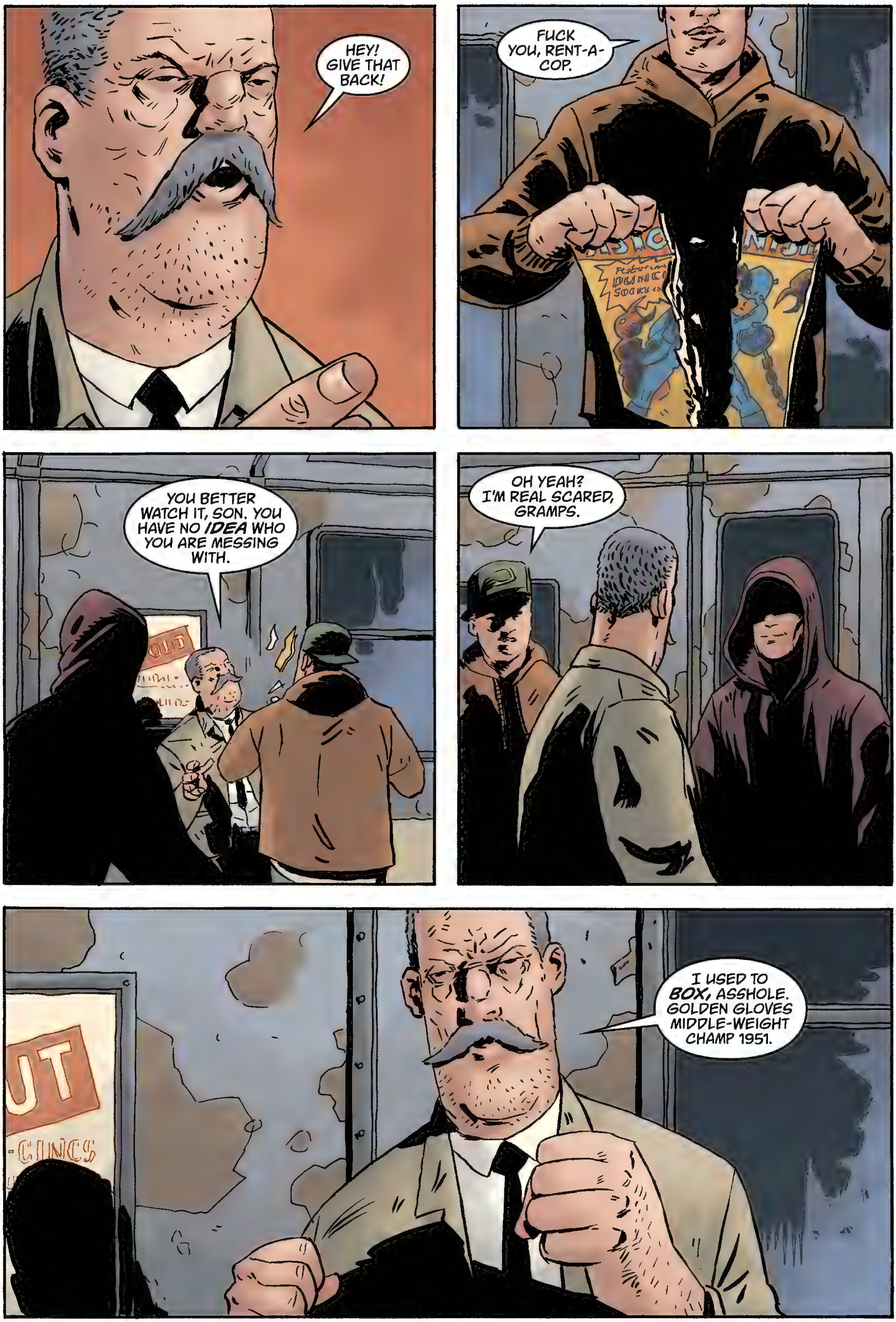
NO!!
KEV KEVZ?!
M-MARK--

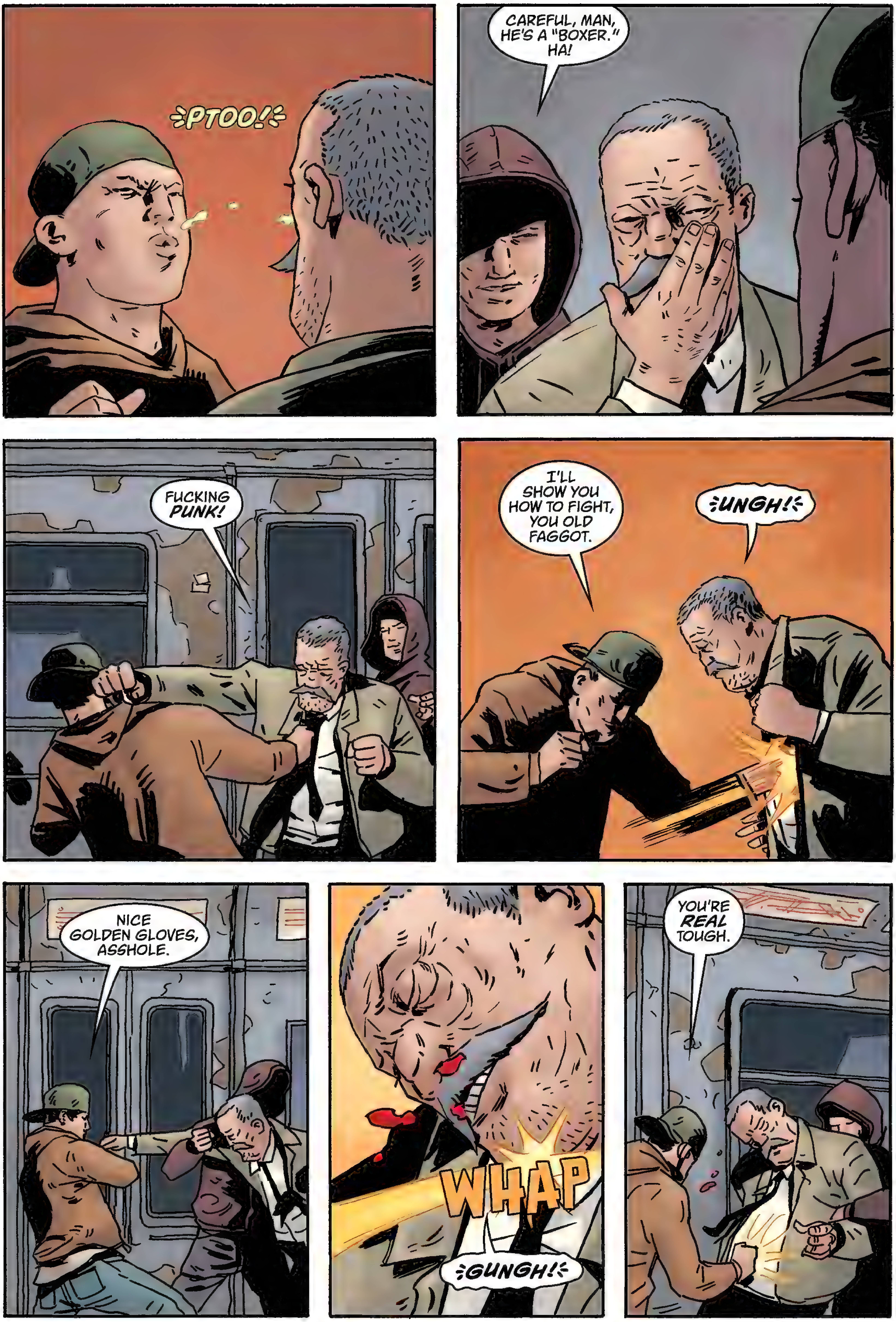

I--I'M SORRY--
COULDN'T STOP THEM.
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT. THIS IS *MY* FAULT. I NEVER SHOULD HAVE DRAGGED YOU INTO THIS.
LOVE YOU...
I LOVE YOU TOO.
SO MUCH.

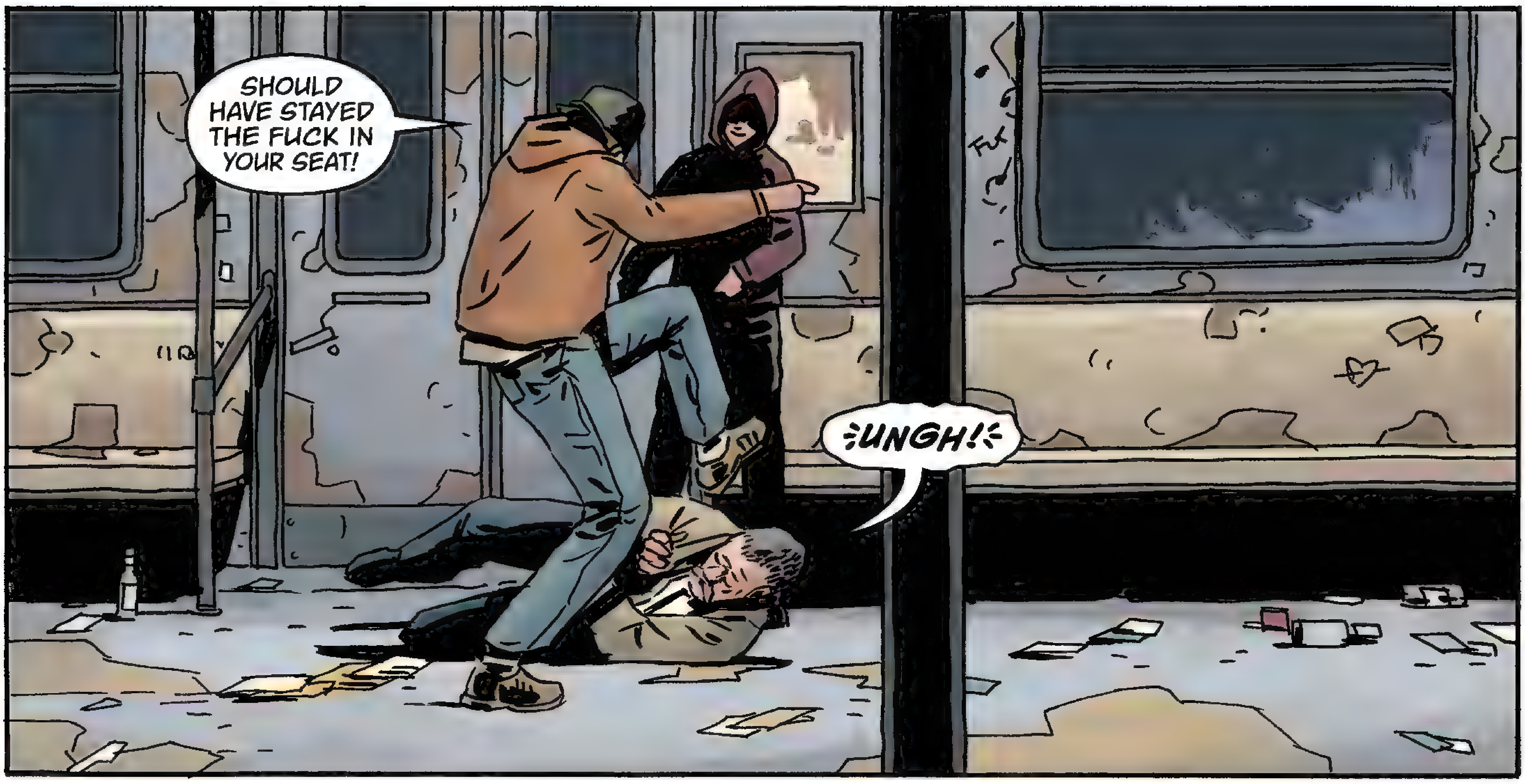

DE
YOU'RE OVER A HALF HOUR LATE, LUCY!
I KNOW. I'M SORRY. THE F-BUS WAS LATE AND I HAD TO *WALK* ALL THE WAY HERE IN THE RAIN.
DON'T GIVE ME THAT *BUS* CRAP AGAIN. THIS IS THE THIRD TIME YOU'VE BEEN LATE THIS MONTH! I HAVE A FULL HOUSE OUT THERE!
OKAY, OKAY. NOT LIKE *YOU* CAN'T SERVE THEM THEIR DAMN PIZZA UNTIL I GET HERE. IT'S NOT ROCKET SCIENCE!

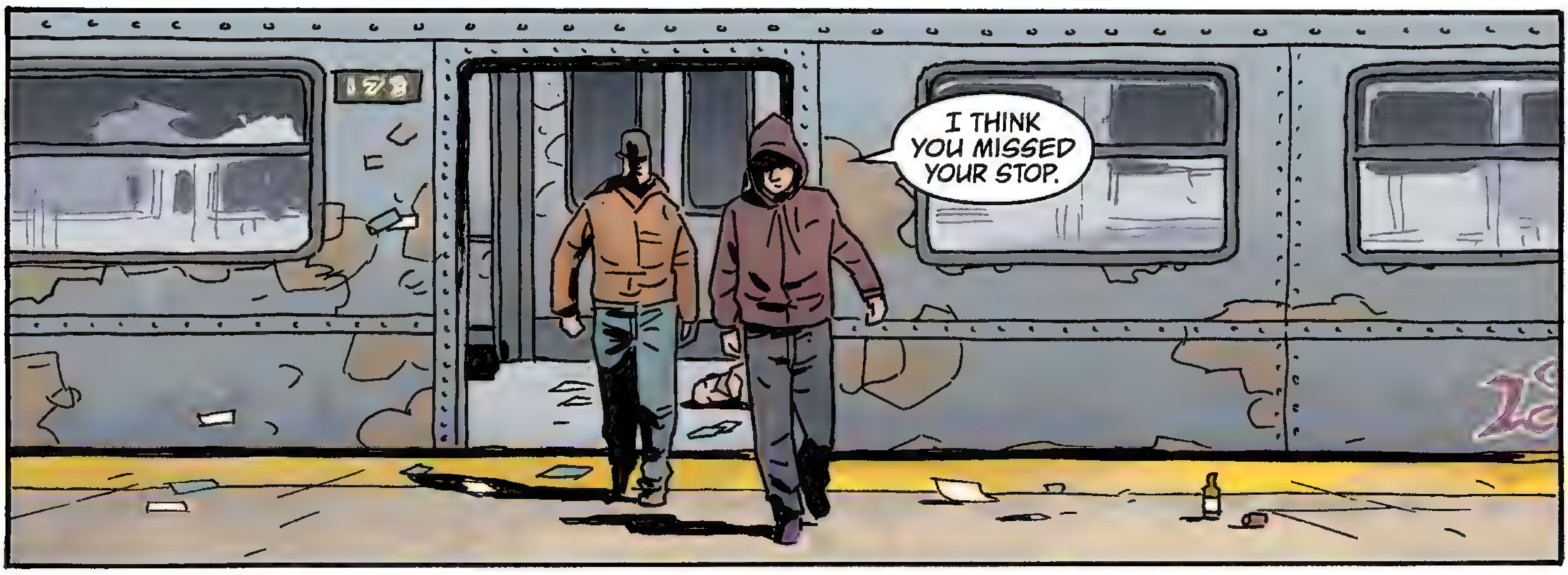

YOU CAN'T TALK TO ME LIKE THAT!
I CAN TALK TO YOU HOWEVER I WANT! YOU MANAGE A SHITTY PIZZA RESTAURANT. YOU'RE NOT THE GODDAMN POPE!
WHAT, YOU THINK YOU'RE TOO GOOD FOR THIS PLACE, LUCY? YOU THINK YOU'RE BETTER THAN THE REST OF US?
YOU THINK YOU'RE SPECIAL OR SOMETHING?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, YEAH. I DO.
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?!
HOME. I QUIT.
YOU CAN'T JUST WALK OUT!
WATCH ME.

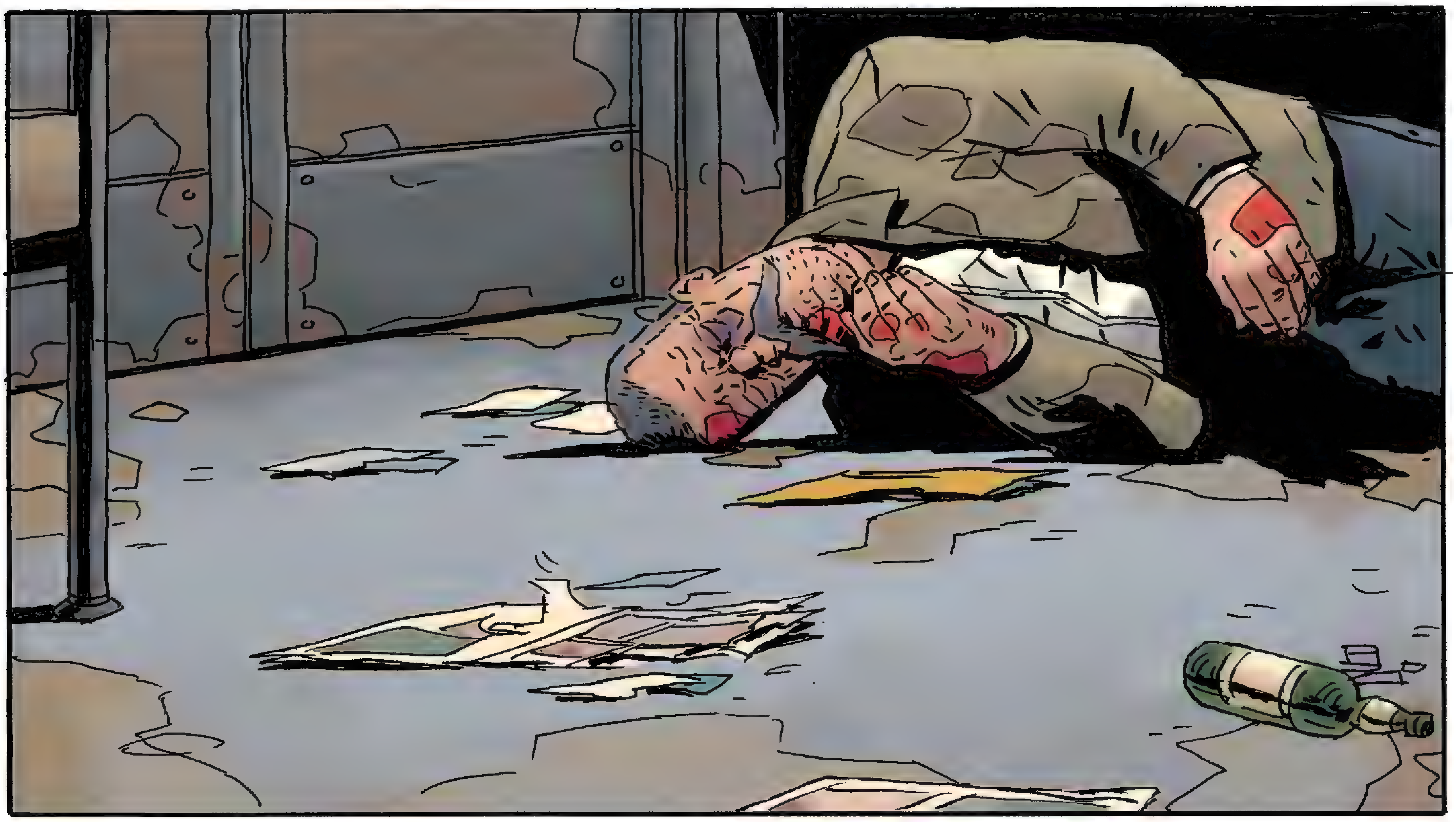

SOLD OUT
BUZZCOCKS
POZ
WHAT YOU READING, GRANDPA? THE FUNNIES?
YEAH. THE FUNNIES.
PUNCH SOCKLINGHAM? THAT'S SOME CORNY SHIT, MAN.
LEAST I *CAN* READ, JUNIOR.
WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU SAY?
SOLD OUT


HEY! GIVE THAT BACK!
FUCK YOU, RENT-A-COP.
YOU BETTER WATCH IT, SON. YOU HAVE NO *IDEA* WHO YOU ARE MESSING WITH.
OH YEAH? I'M REAL SCARED, GRAMPS.
I USED TO ***BOX,*** ASSHOLE. GOLDEN GLOVES MIDDLE-WEIGHT CHAMP 1951.

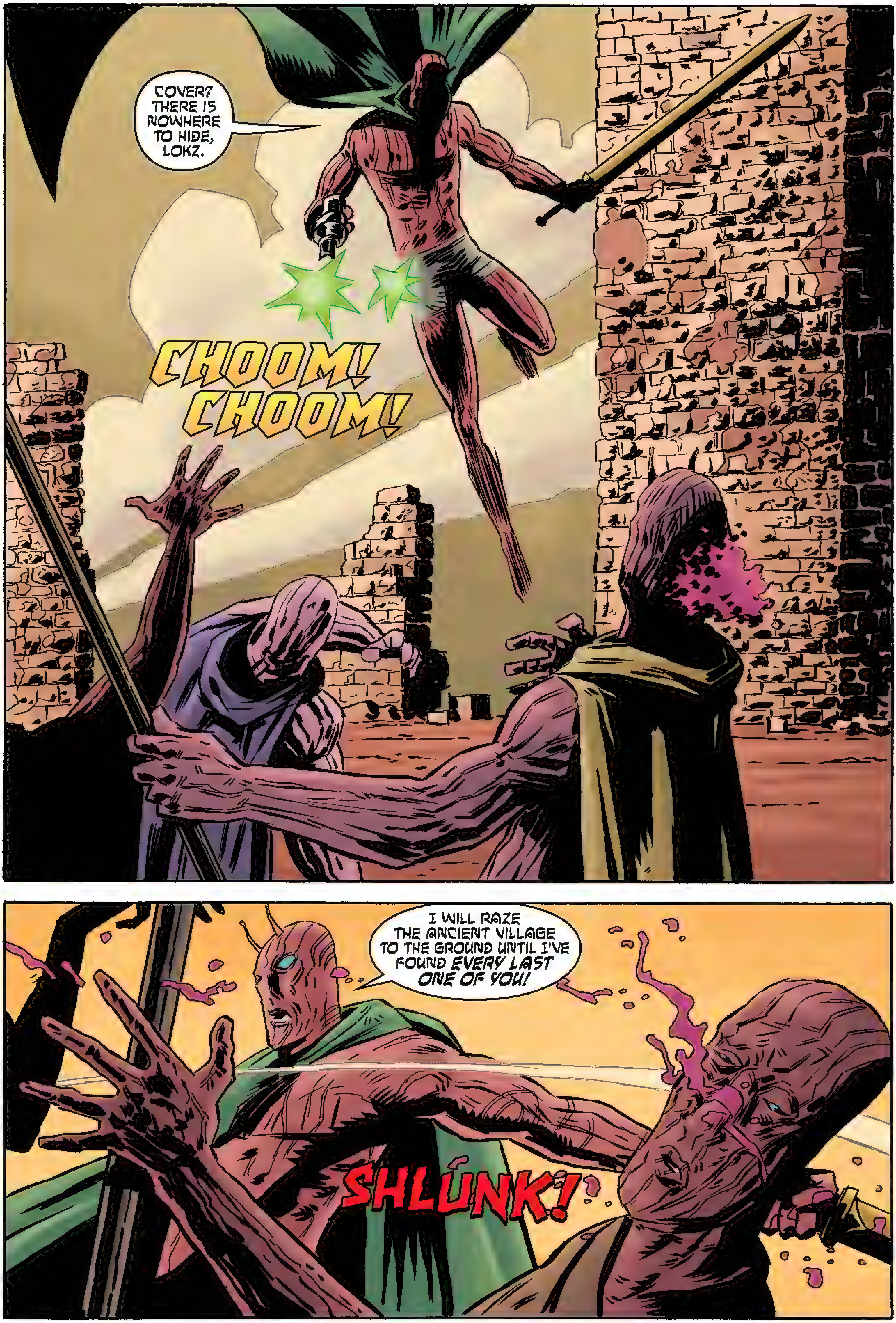

PTOO!
CAREFUL, MAN, HE'S A "BOXER." HA!
FUCKING *PUNK!*
I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO FIGHT, YOU OLD FAGGOT.
UNGH!
NICE GOLDEN GLOVES, ASSHOLE.
WHAP
GUNGH!
YOU'RE *REAL* TOUGH.

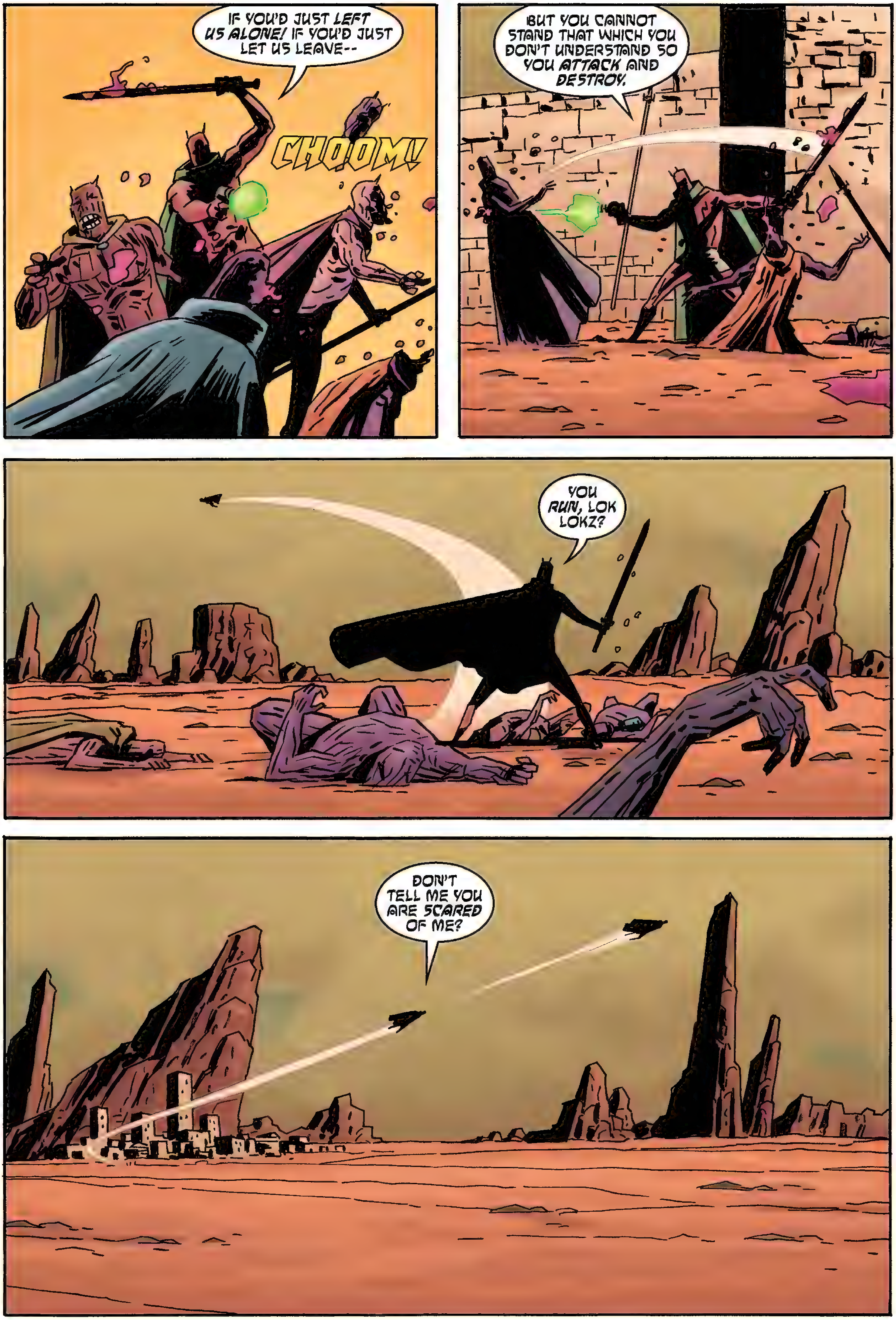

SHOULD HAVE STAYED THE FUCK IN YOUR SEAT!
UNGH!

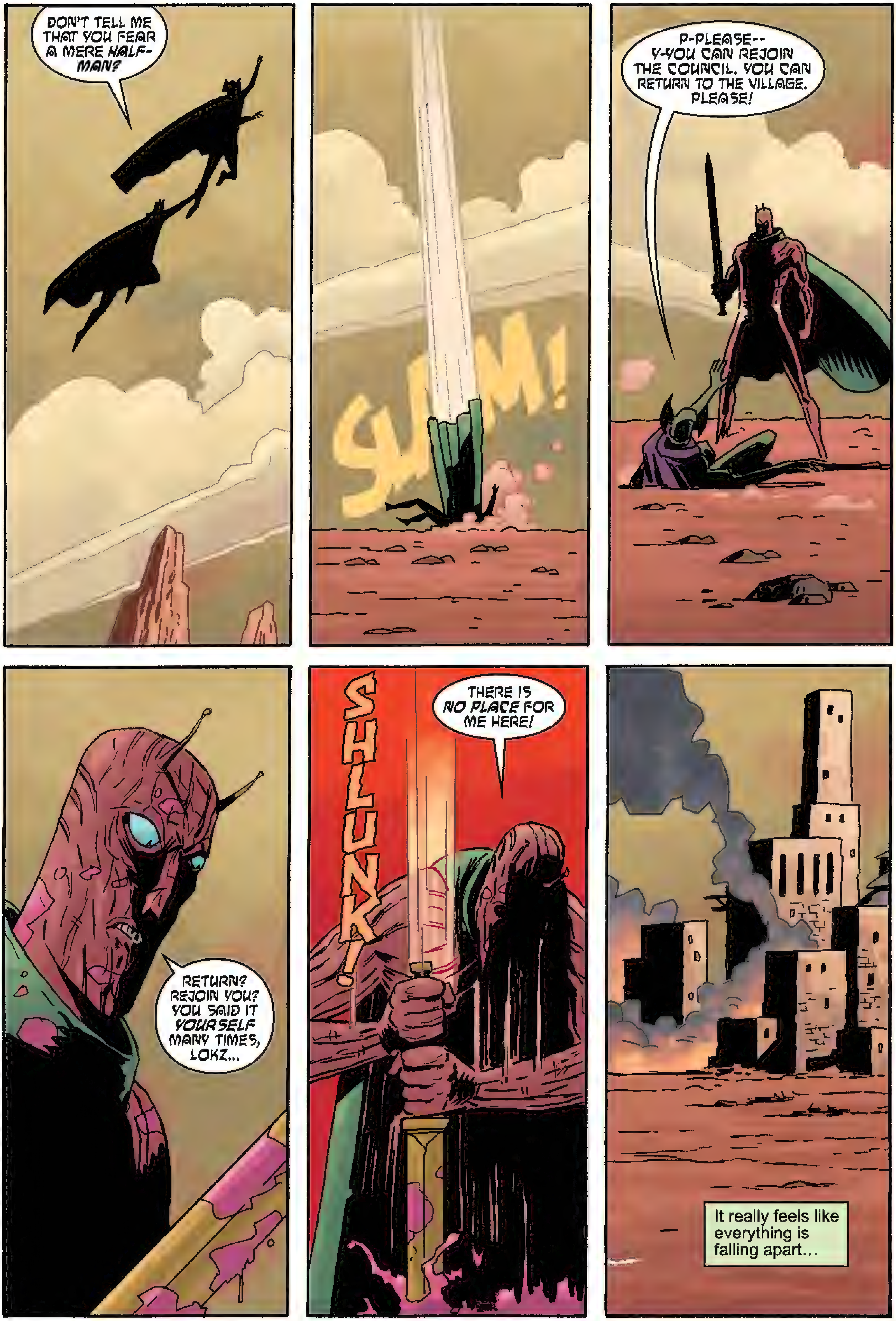

I THINK YOU MISSED YOUR STOP.



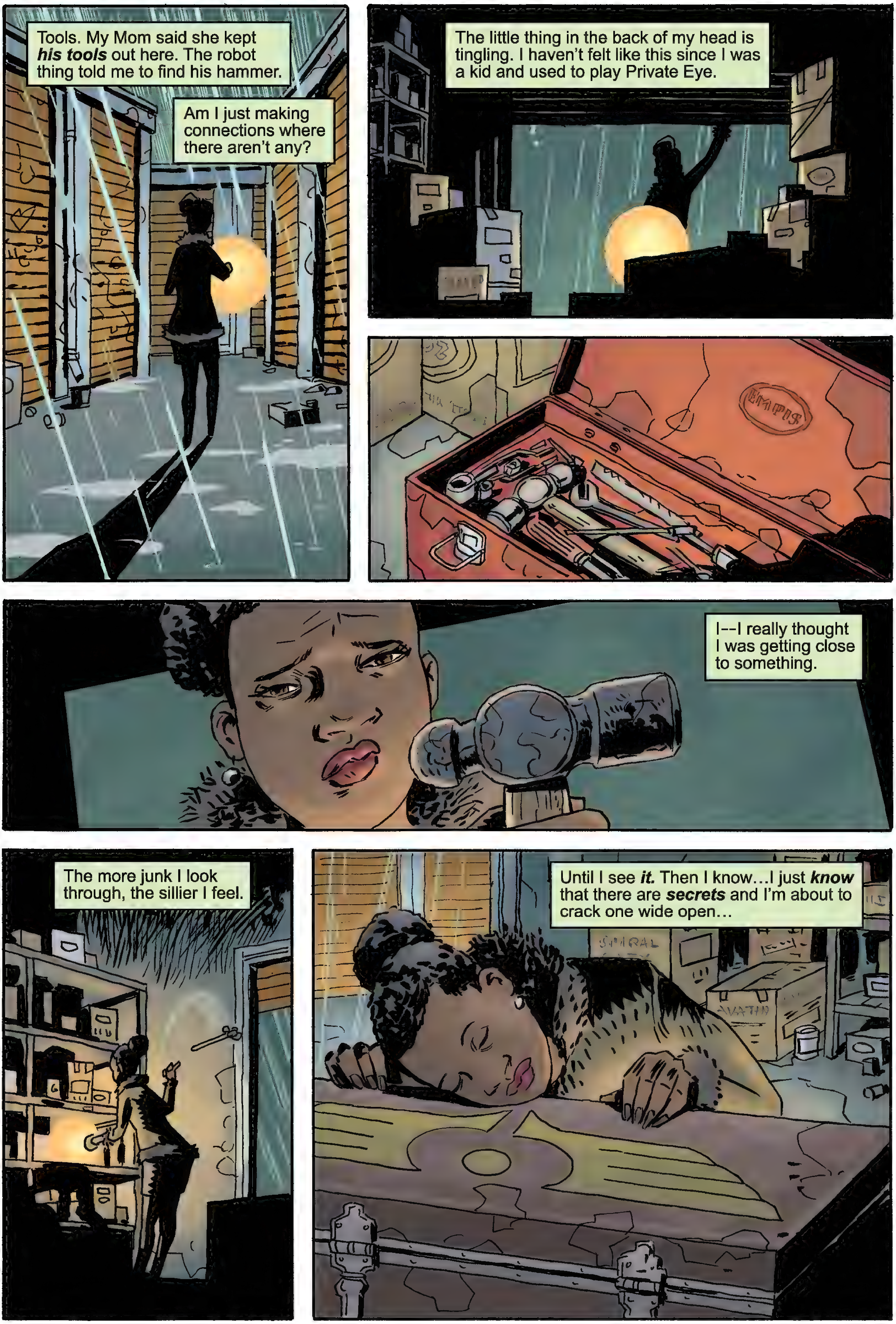
WE SHOULD CALL A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL. THERE IS A CHANCE MARKZ MIGHT TRY AND RETALIATE.
PERFECT. IT WILL GIVE ME AN EXCUSE TO FINALLY *EXECUTE* THE FORNICATOR LIKE WE DID HIS HALF-MAN LOVER.
CHOOM!
CHOOM!
CHOOM!
IT'S HIM--FIND COVER!


COVER? THERE IS NOWHERE TO HIDE, LOKZ.
CHOOM! CHOOM!
I WILL RAZE THE ANCIENT VILLAGE TO THE GROUND UNTIL I'VE FOUND *EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU!*
SHLUNK!

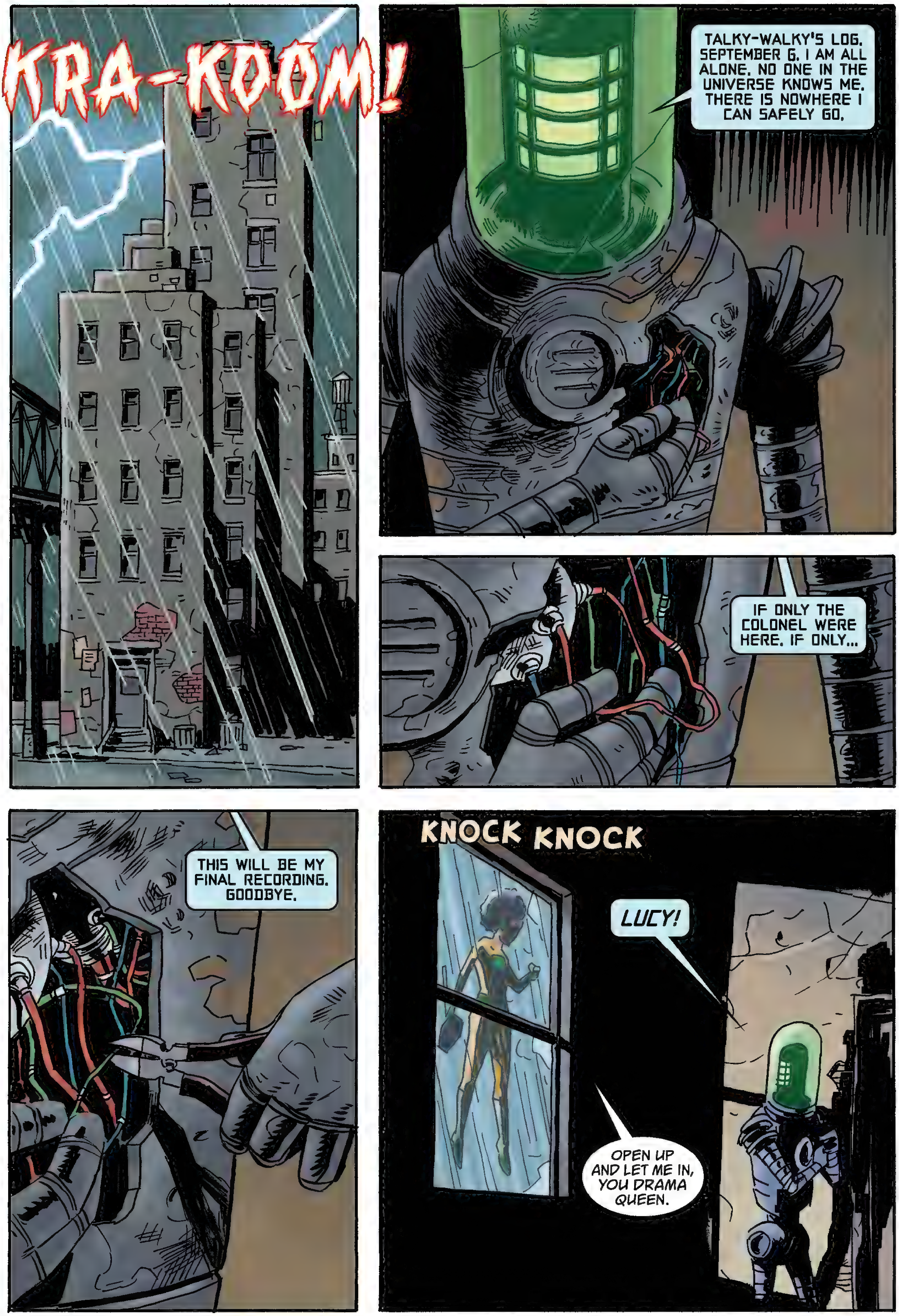

IF YOU'D JUST LEFT US ALONE! IF YOU'D JUST LET US LEAVE--
CHOOM!
BUT YOU CANNOT STAND THAT WHICH YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND SO YOU ATTACK AND DESTROY.
YOU RUN, LOK LOKZ?
DON'T TELL ME YOU ARE SCARED OF ME?


DON'T TELL ME THAT YOU FEAR A MERE *HALF-MAN?*
SLAM!
P-PLEASE-- Y-YOU CAN REJOIN THE COUNCIL. YOU CAN RETURN TO THE VILLAGE. PLEASE!
RETURN? REJOIN YOU? YOU SAID IT *YOURSELF* MANY TIMES, LOKZ...
SHLUNK!
THERE IS *NO PLACE* FOR ME HERE!
It really feels like everything is falling apart…

I try to forget about that weird robot-thing and all the crazy shit he told me. I don't tell anyone. How the hell would I *even begin* to explain it anyway?!
EMPIRE
But it keeps nagging me. That thing. That thing I can't quite grasp. And two days later I find myself at my mom's.
...HERE'S THE LAST OF IT. WHY THE SUDDEN URGE TO TAKE A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE, LUCY?
I JUST WANTED TO CHECK IT OUT. HAVEN'T LOOKED AT ANY OF DAD'S OLD STUFF SINCE I WAS A KID.
WELL, YOU'RE WELCOME TO ANY OF IT. SHOULD PROBABLY GIVE IT TO THE SALVATION ARMY ANYWAY.
OH, COME ON, MOM. THIS IS ALL WE HAVE LEFT OF DAD. WE CAN'T GET RID OF THIS STUFF.
SPIRAL CITY SLUGGER
MOM...DOES THE NAME BLACK HAMMER MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU?
WHAT *IS* THAT? THE BRITISH POLICE SHOW ON BBC AMERICA?
NO. IT'S... IT'S NOTHING. AND YOU'RE SURE THIS IS ALL OF IT?
YEP, ALL THE STUFF THAT'S NOT IN STORAGE.
STORAGE?
SURE. I PUT A LOT OF YOUR DAD'S STUFF IN A STORAGE LOCKER IN THE BOROUGHS. BIGGER STUFF, LIKE HIS *TOOLS* AND WHAT NOT.


Tools. My Mom said she kept ***his tools*** out here. The robot thing told me to find his hammer.
Am I just making connections where there aren't any?
The little thing in the back of my head is tingling. I haven't felt like this since I was a kid and used to play Private Eye.
I--I really thought I was getting close to something.
The more junk I look through, the sillier I feel.
Until I see ***it.*** Then I know…I just ***know*** that there are ***secrets*** and I'm about to crack one wide open…

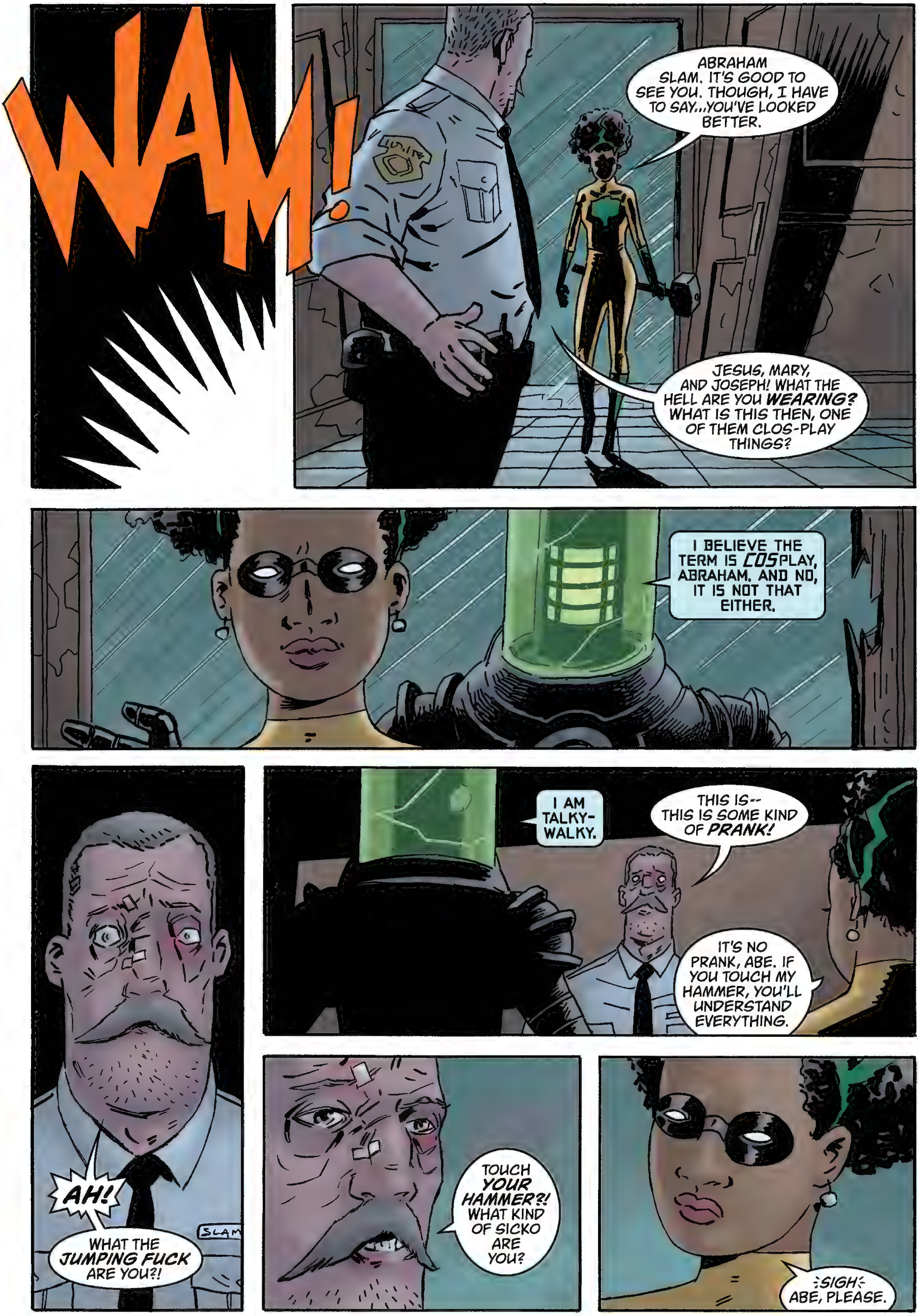
DADDY?
KRA-KOOM!
HOLY SHIT!
CF 10
CUBIC
BOX

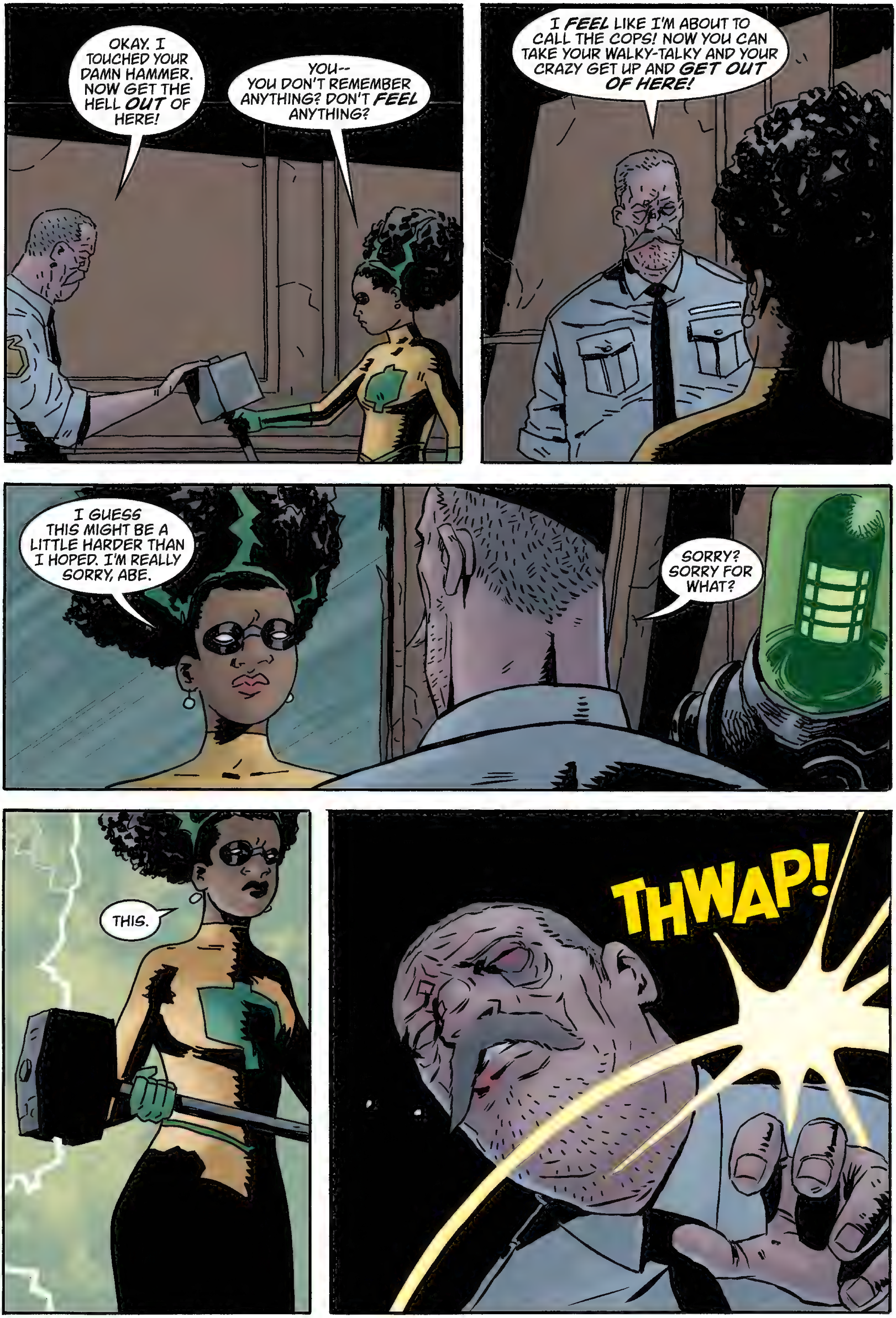

KRA-KOOM!
TALKY-WALKY'S LOG. SEPTEMBER 6. I AM ALL ALONE. NO ONE IN THE UNIVERSE KNOWS ME. THERE IS NOWHERE I CAN SAFELY GO.
IF ONLY THE COLONEL WERE HERE. IF ONLY...
THIS WILL BE MY FINAL RECORDING. GOODBYE.
KNOCK KNOCK
LUCY!
OPEN UP AND LET ME IN, YOU DRAMA QUEEN.

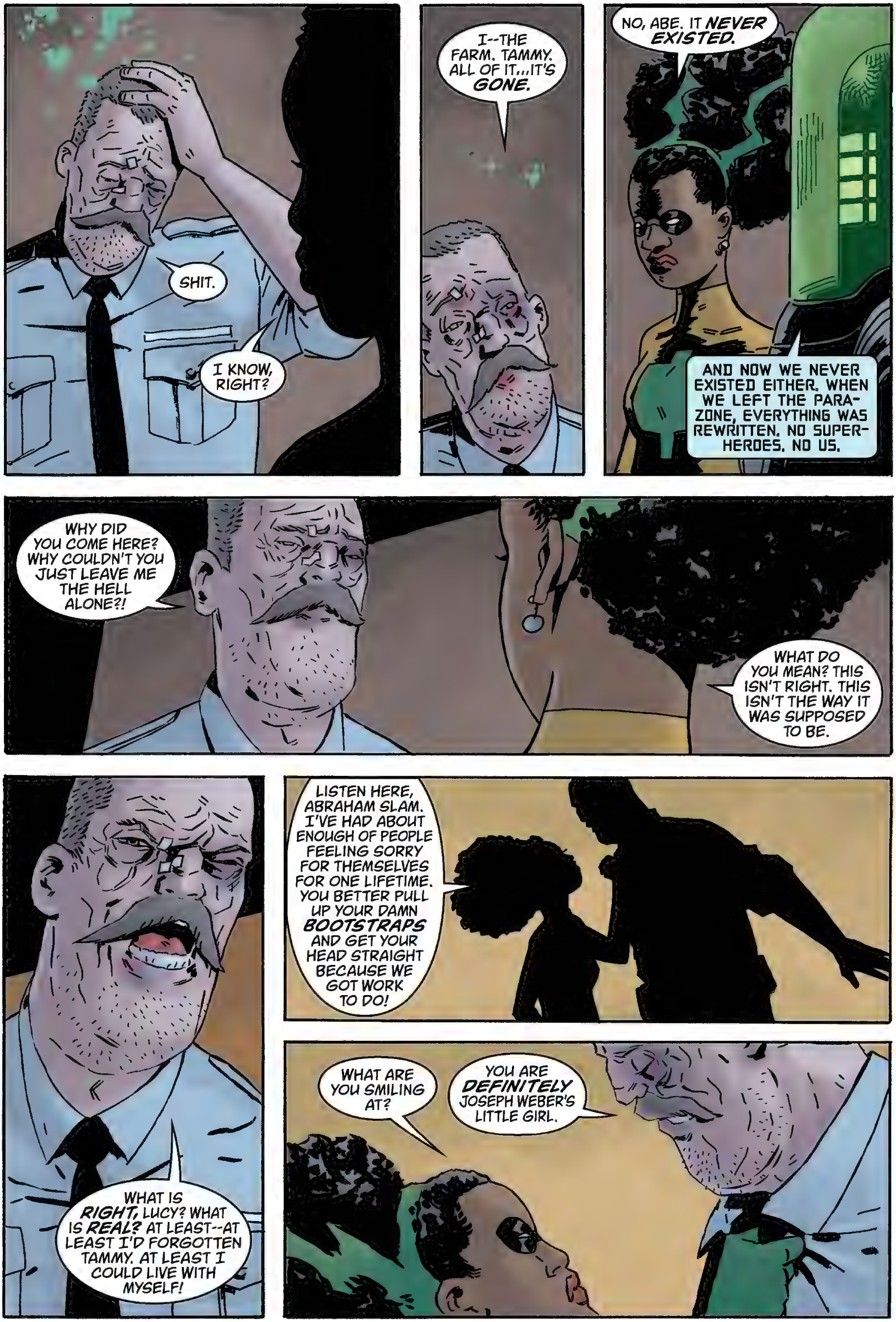
YOU BELIEVED ME! I--I HAD GIVEN UP HOPE!
WELL, I'M BACK. AND I REMEMBER *EVERYTHING.* I'M SORRY I DOUBTED YOU, TALKY.
PLEASE, IT WAS NOT YOUR FAULT. YOU'RE HERE, LUCY. THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS NOW.
I HAVE TO ASK, TALKY. WHERE IS COLONEL WEIRD? HAS HE FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING TOO?
I'M AFRAID IT IS FAR WORSE THAN THAT. HISTORICAL RECORDS IN THIS TIMELINE REVEAL THAT COLONEL WEIRD NEVER RETURNED FROM SPACE IN 1956. HE--HE DIED ON HIS FIRST MISSION.
I'M SORRY. WHAT ABOUT THE *OTHERS?* GAIL, MADAME DRAGON-FLY, ABE? DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY ARE?
OF COURSE I DO. I HAVE HAD *A LOT* OF TIME ON MY HANDS TO RESEARCH. BUT IT WON'T BE EASY. NONE OF THEM HAVE ANY RECOLLECTION OF WHO THEY REALLY ARE. I--I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!
I DO. WE'RE GOING TO *FIND THEM,* TALKY. AND WE'RE GOING TO GET THEM ALL *HOME.*

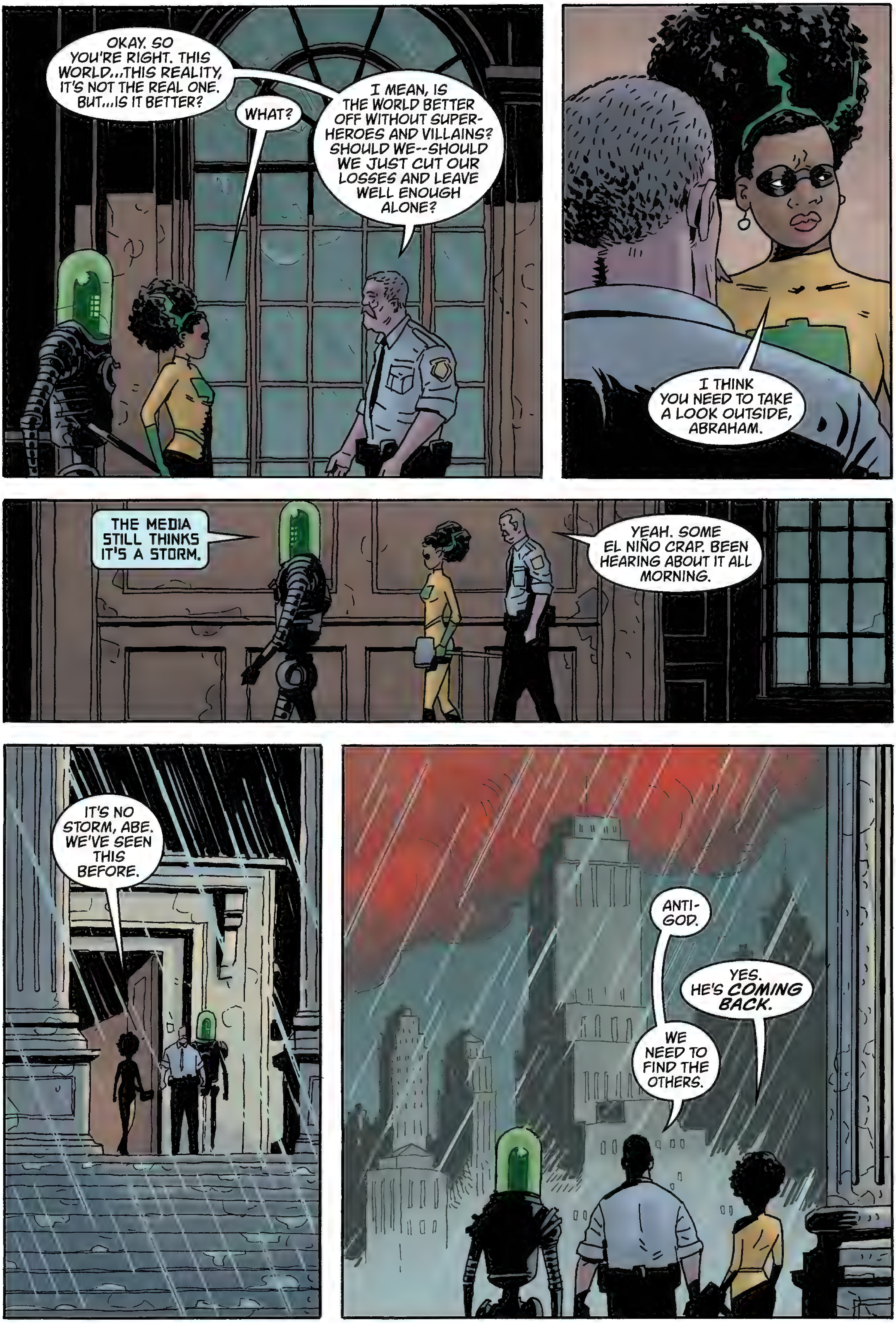
FIFFE

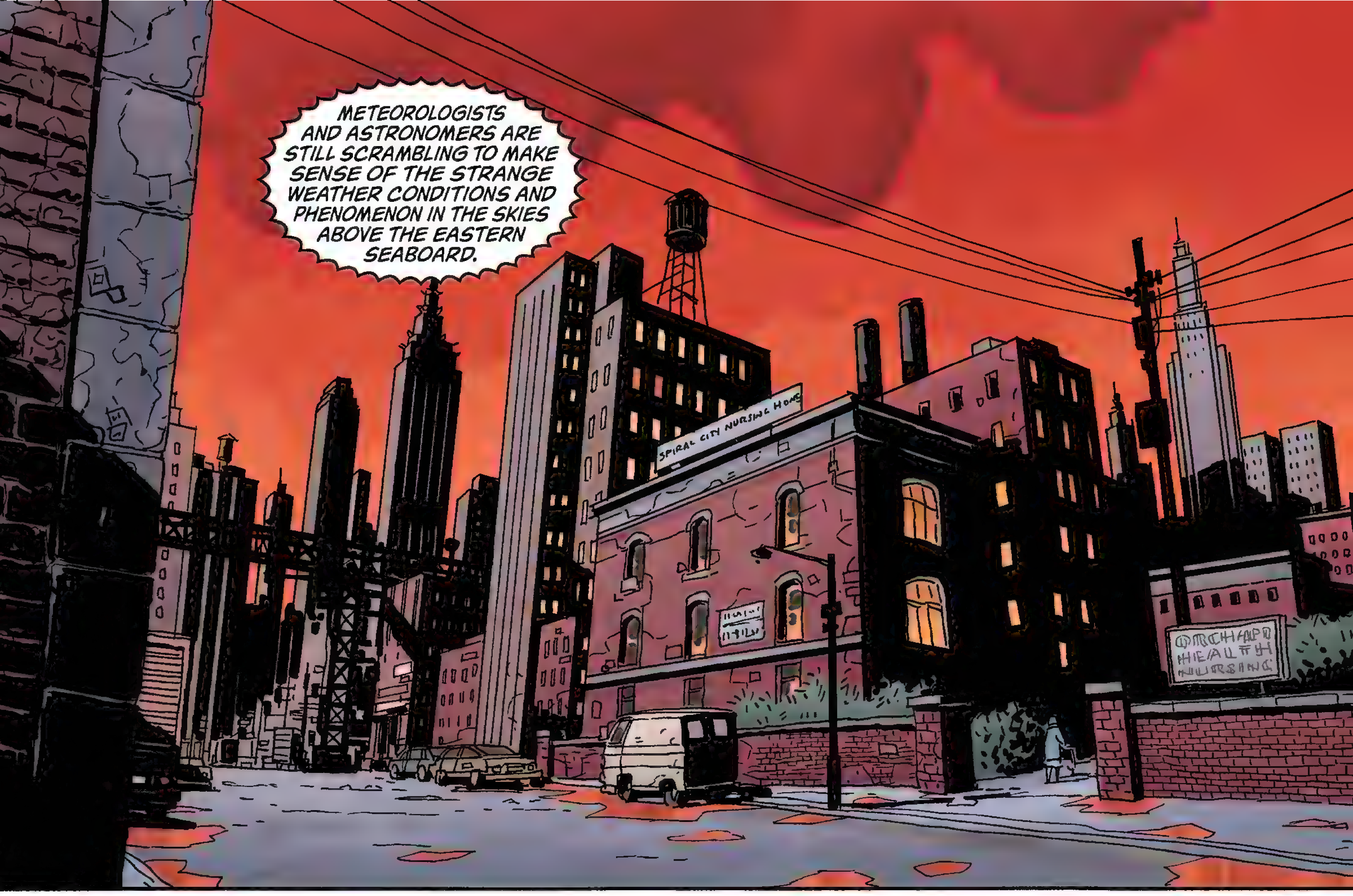
--ANOTHER STORMY DAY IN SPIRAL CITY. WINDS ARE EXPECTED TO REACH OVER ONE HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR AND RAIN WILL CONTINUE INTO THE AFTERNOON AS THIS FREAK STORM CONTINUES TO ROLL IN.
SPIRAL CITY MUSEUM
IN OTHER NEWS THE SPIRAL BADGERS BEAT THE METRO MIGHTS TO ADVANCE TO THE NEXT ROUND OF THE STANLEY CUP--kzZt
KRKT!
KRKT!
N-NOW LOOK HERE! I--GOT A GUN AND I ALREADY CALLED THE COPS!
SLAMK
SO WHOEVER YOU ARE, YOU BETTER BACK OFF! YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE MESSING WITH!

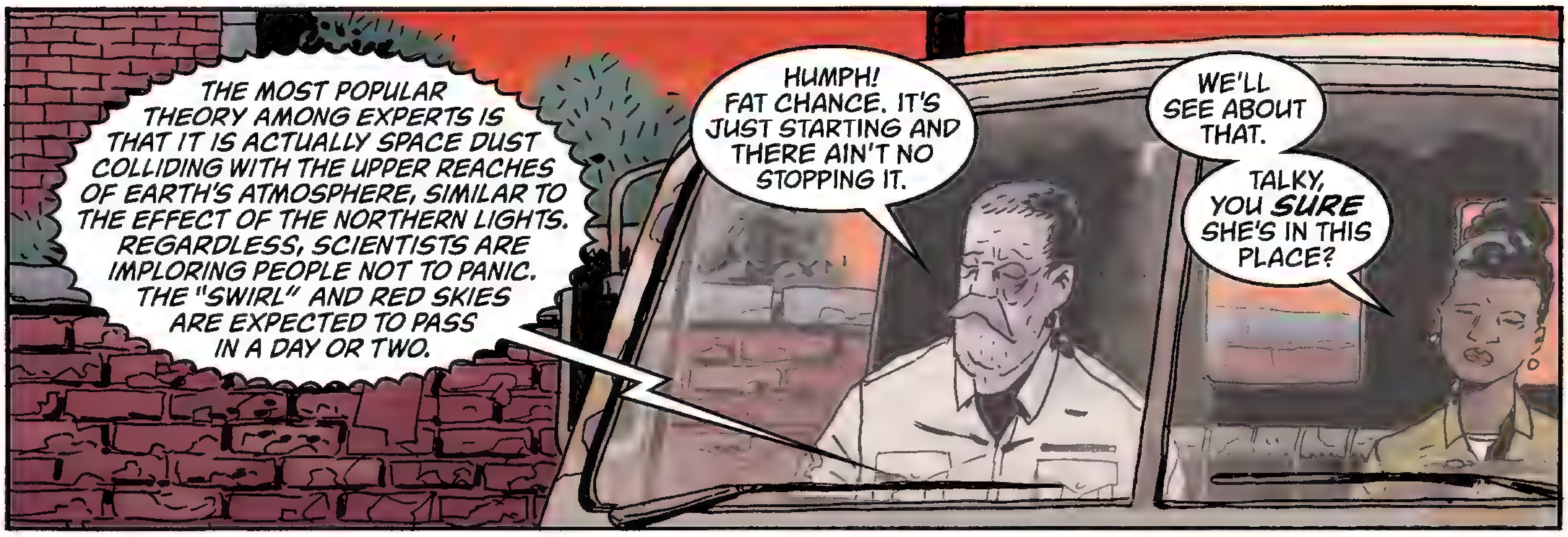

WAM!
ABRAHAM SLAM. IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU. THOUGH, I HAVE TO SAY...YOU'VE LOOKED BETTER.
JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU WEARING? WHAT IS THIS THEN, ONE OF THEM CLOS-PLAY THINGS?
I BELIEVE THE TERM IS COSPLAY, ABRAHAM. AND NO, IT IS NOT THAT EITHER.
AH!
WHAT THE JUMPING FUCK ARE YOU?!
SLAM
I AM TALKY-WALKY.
THIS IS-- THIS IS SOME KIND OF PRANK!
IT'S NO PRANK, ABE. IF YOU TOUCH MY HAMMER, YOU'LL UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING.
TOUCH YOUR HAMMER?! WHAT KIND OF SICKO ARE YOU?
SIGH ABE, PLEASE.

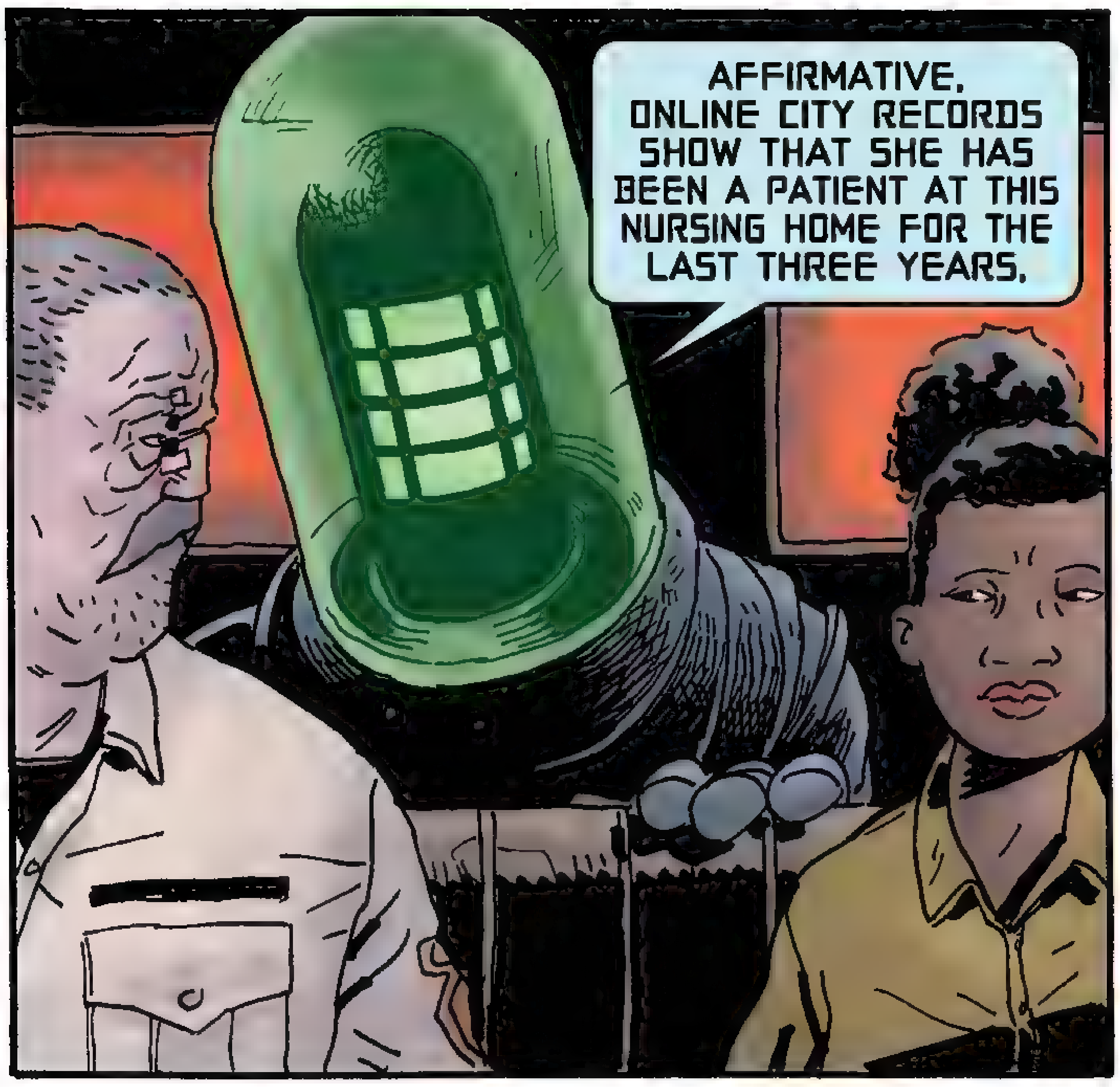

OKAY. I TOUCHED YOUR DAMN HAMMER. NOW GET THE HELL *OUT* OF HERE!
YOU-- YOU DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING? DON'T *FEEL* ANYTHING?
I *FEEL* LIKE I'M ABOUT TO CALL THE COPS! NOW YOU CAN TAKE YOUR WALKY-TALKY AND YOUR CRAZY GET UP AND *GET OUT OF HERE!*
I GUESS THIS MIGHT BE A LITTLE HARDER THAN I HOPED. I'M REALLY SORRY, ABE.
SORRY? SORRY FOR WHAT?
THIS.
THWAP!

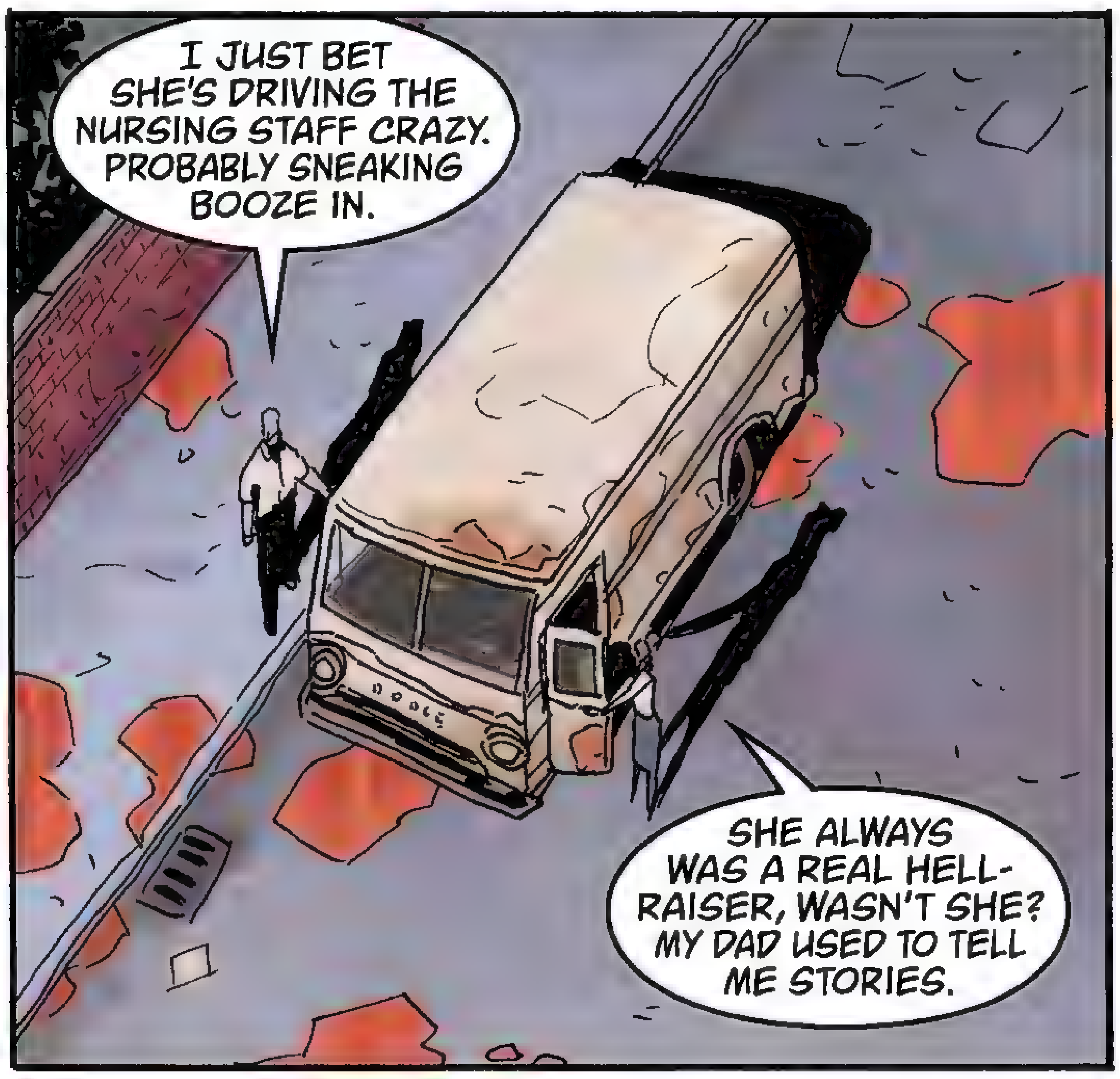

SHIT.
I KNOW, RIGHT?
I--THE FARM. TAMMY. ALL OF IT...IT'S *GONE.*
NO, ABE. IT *NEVER EXISTED.*
AND NOW WE NEVER EXISTED EITHER. WHEN WE LEFT THE PARA-ZONE, EVERYTHING WAS REWRITTEN. NO SUPER-HEROES. NO US.
WHY DID YOU COME HERE? WHY COULDN'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME THE HELL ALONE?!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? THIS ISN'T RIGHT. THIS ISN'T THE WAY IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE.
WHAT IS *RIGHT,* LUCY? WHAT IS *REAL?* AT LEAST--AT LEAST I'D FORGOTTEN TAMMY. AT LEAST I COULD LIVE WITH MYSELF!
LISTEN HERE, ABRAHAM SLAM. I'VE HAD ABOUT ENOUGH OF PEOPLE FEELING SORRY FOR THEMSELVES FOR ONE LIFETIME. YOU BETTER PULL UP YOUR DAMN *BOOTSTRAPS* AND GET YOUR HEAD STRAIGHT BECAUSE WE GOT WORK TO DO!
WHAT ARE YOU SMILING AT?
YOU ARE *DEFINITELY* JOSEPH WEBER'S LITTLE GIRL.

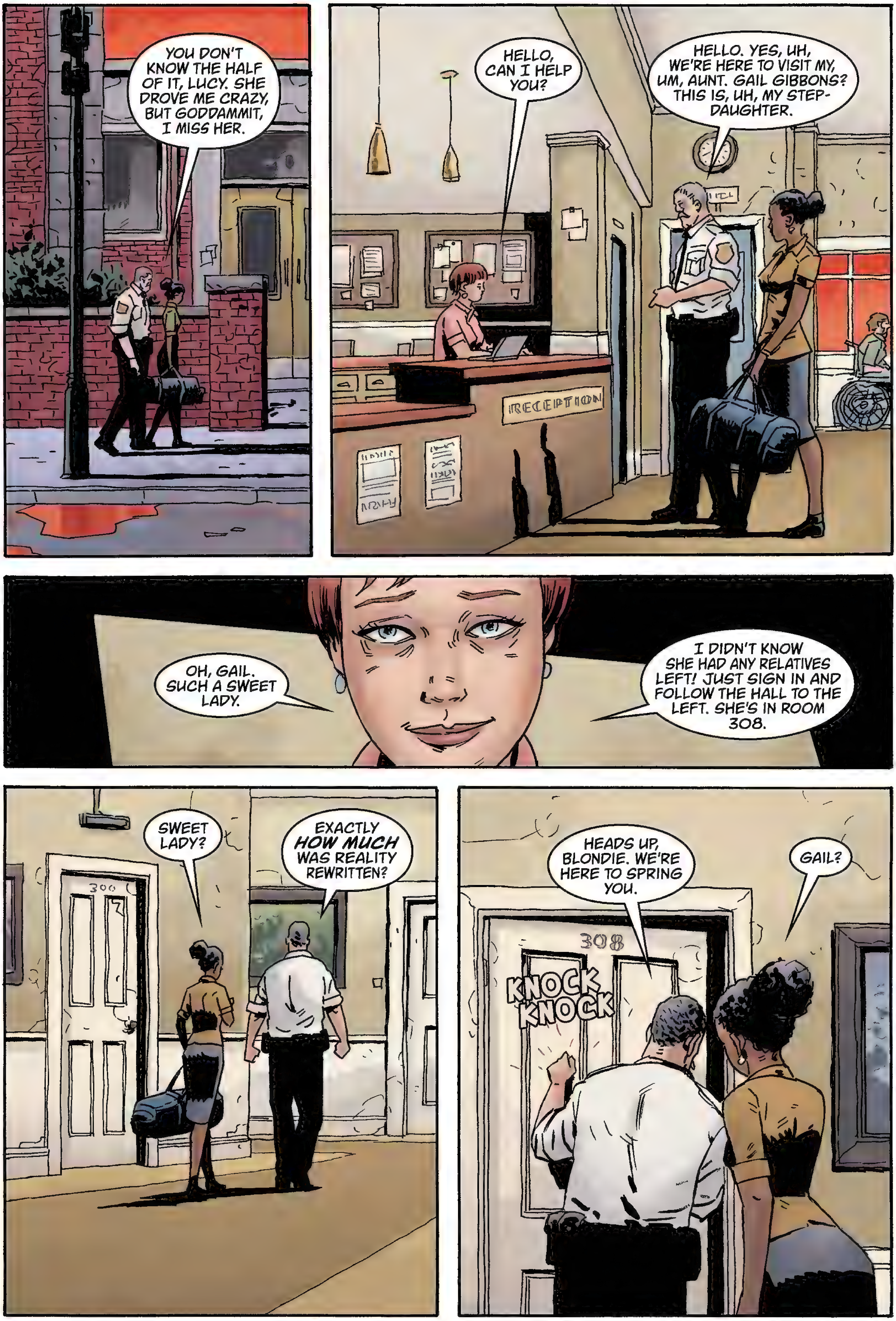

OKAY. SO YOU'RE RIGHT. THIS WORLD...THIS REALITY, IT'S NOT THE REAL ONE. BUT...IS IT BETTER?
WHAT?
I MEAN, IS THE WORLD BETTER OFF WITHOUT SUPER-HEROES AND VILLAINS? SHOULD WE--SHOULD WE JUST CUT OUR LOSSES AND LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE?
I THINK YOU NEED TO TAKE A LOOK OUTSIDE, ABRAHAM.
THE MEDIA STILL THINKS IT'S A STORM.
YEAH. SOME EL NIÑO CRAP. BEEN HEARING ABOUT IT ALL MORNING.
IT'S NO STORM, ABE. WE'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE.
ANTI-GOD.
WE NEED TO FIND THE OTHERS.
YES. HE'S *COMING BACK.*

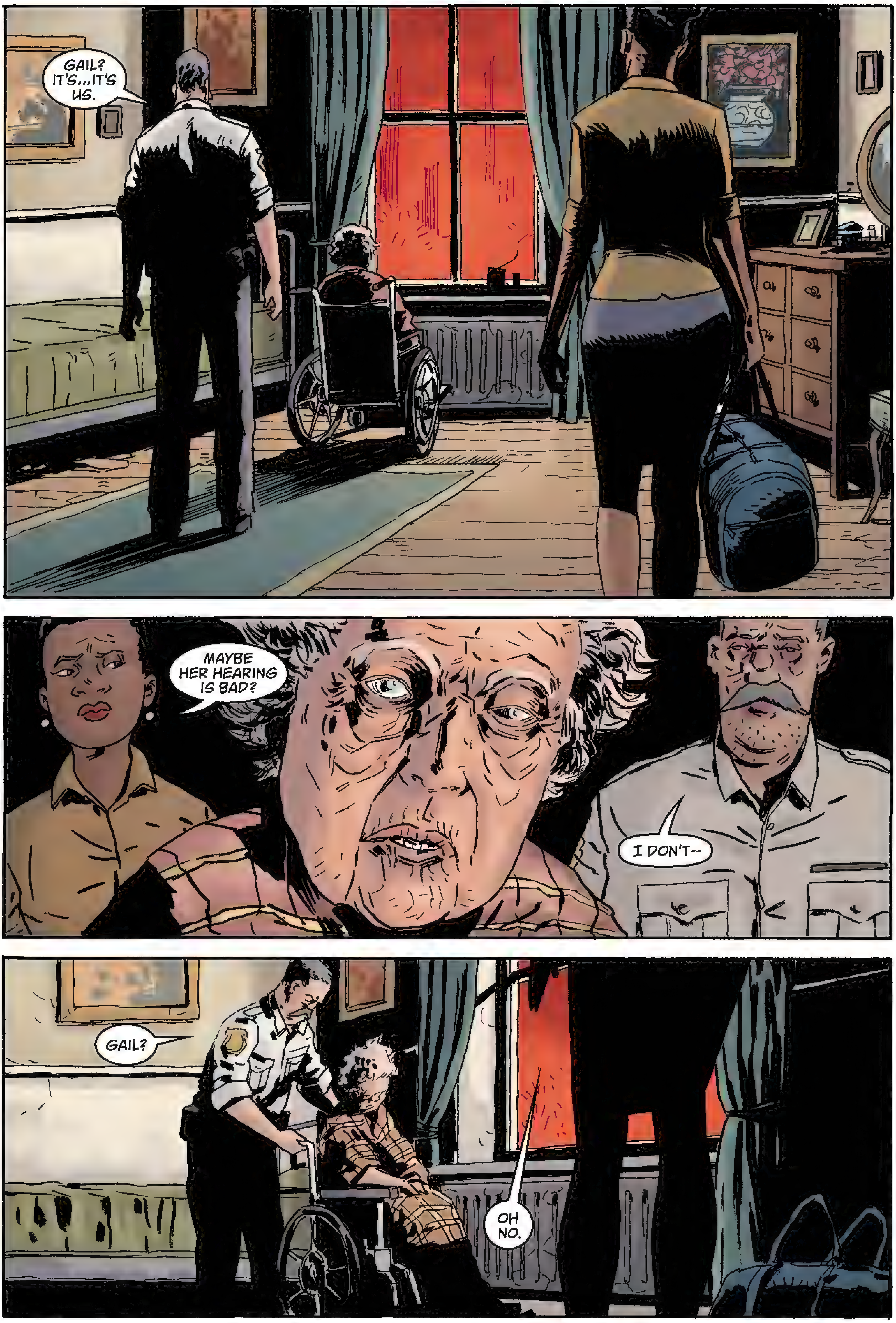

METEOROLOGISTS AND ASTRONOMERS ARE STILL SCRAMBLING TO MAKE SENSE OF THE STRANGE WEATHER CONDITIONS AND PHENOMENON IN THE SKIES ABOVE THE EASTERN SEABOARD.
SPIRAL CITY NURSING HOME

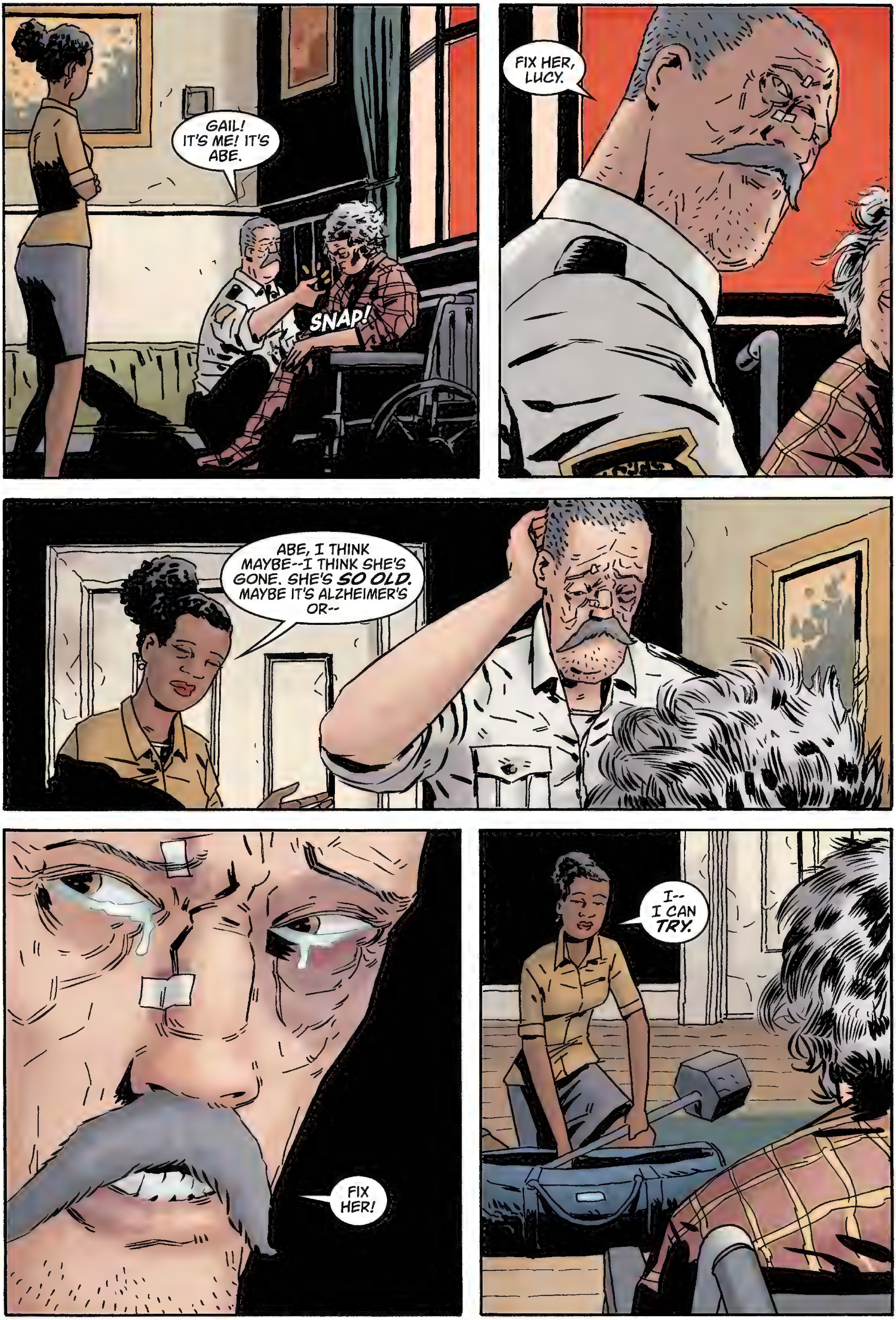

THE MOST POPULAR THEORY AMONG EXPERTS IS THAT IT IS ACTUALLY SPACE DUST COLLIDING WITH THE UPPER REACHES OF EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE, SIMILAR TO THE EFFECT OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS. REGARDLESS, SCIENTISTS ARE IMPLORING PEOPLE NOT TO PANIC. THE "SWIRL" AND RED SKIES ARE EXPECTED TO PASS IN A DAY OR TWO.
HUMPH! FAT CHANCE. IT'S JUST STARTING AND THERE AIN'T NO STOPPING IT.
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT.
TALKY, YOU *SURE* SHE'S IN THIS PLACE?

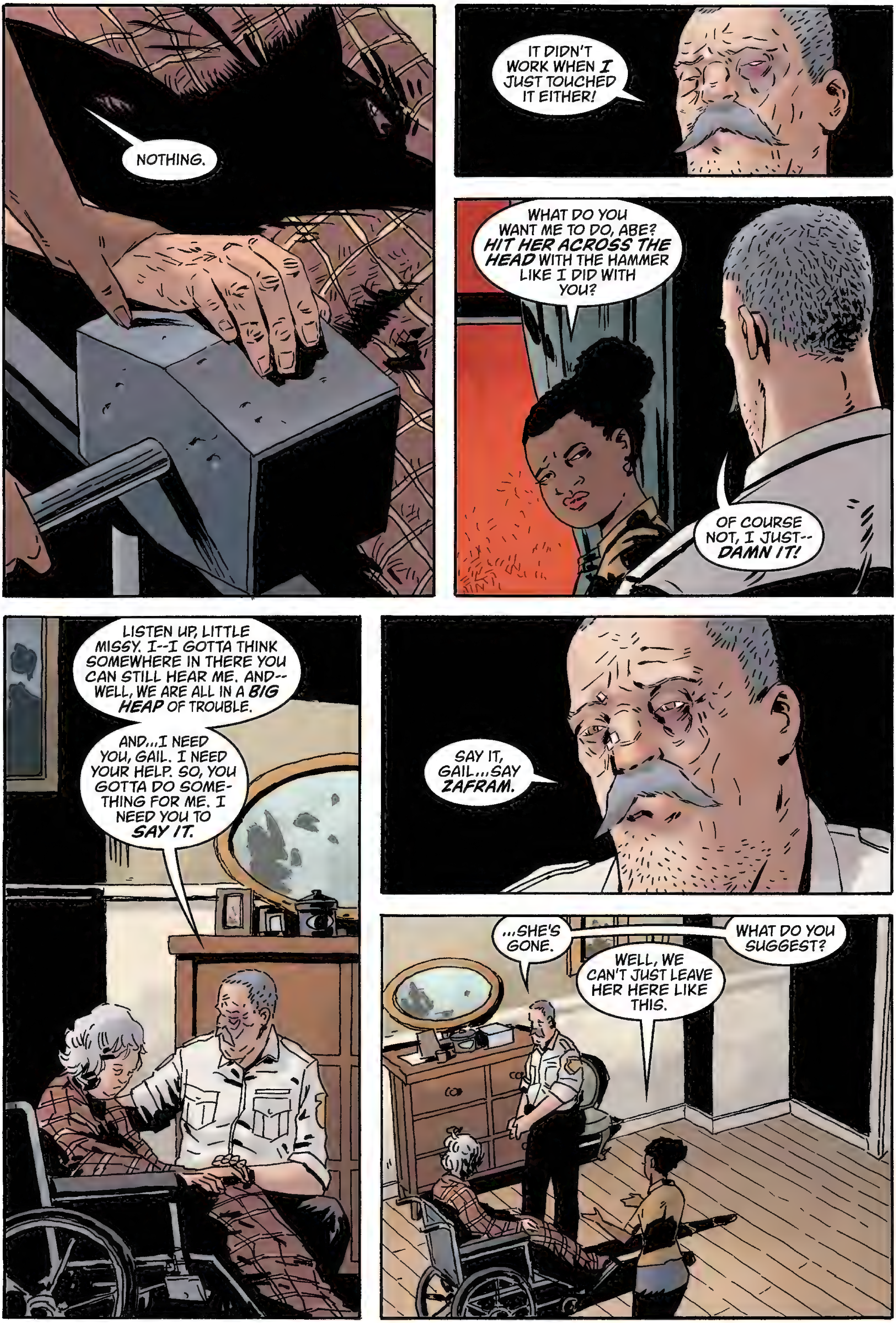

AFFIRMATIVE. ONLINE CITY RECORDS SHOW THAT SHE HAS BEEN A PATIENT AT THIS NURSING HOME FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS.

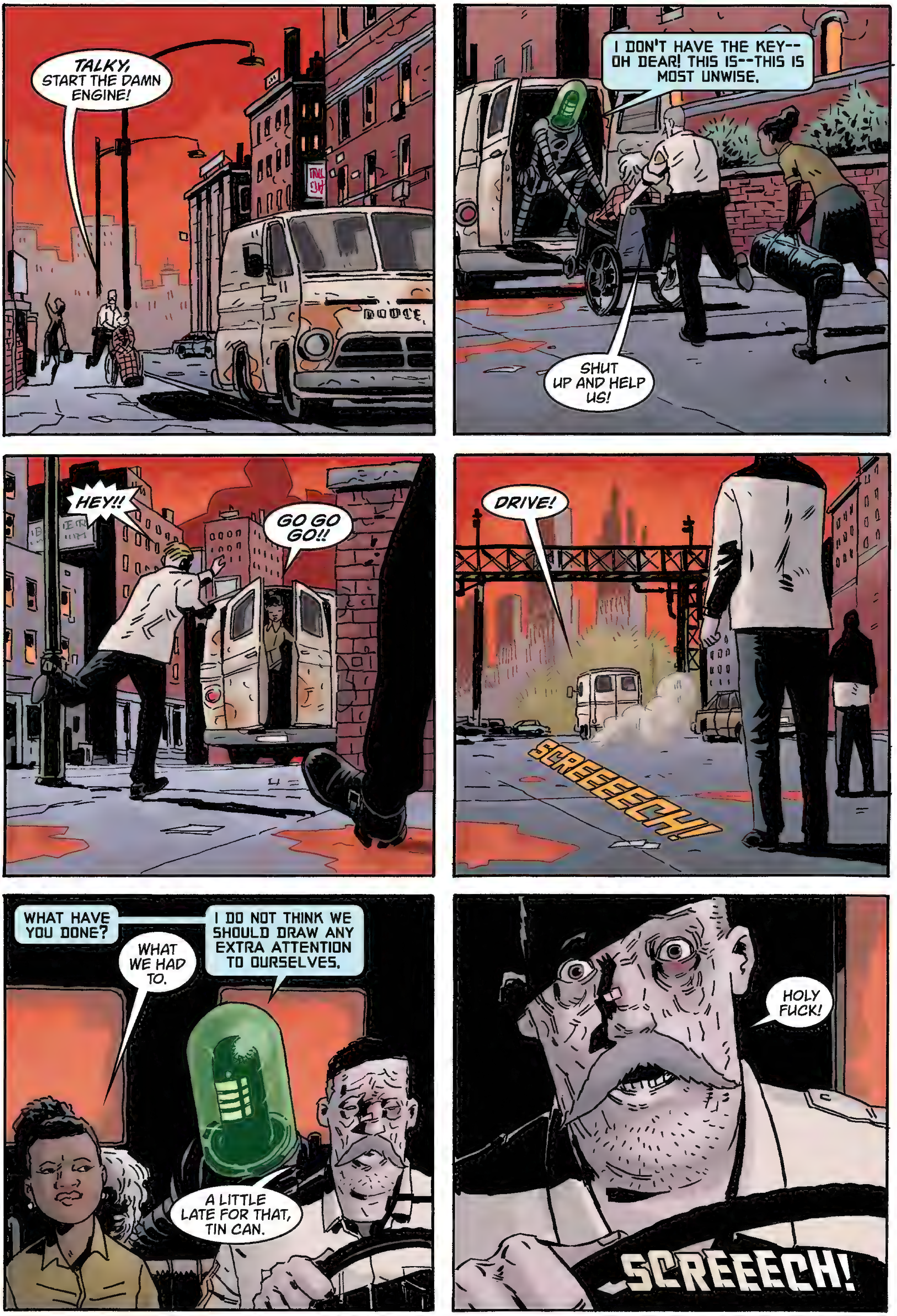

I JUST BET SHE'S DRIVING THE NURSING STAFF CRAZY. PROBABLY SNEAKING BOOZE IN.
SHE ALWAYS WAS A REAL HELL-RAISER, WASN'T SHE? MY DAD USED TO TELL ME STORIES.


YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT, LUCY. SHE DROVE ME CRAZY, BUT GODDAMMIT, I MISS HER.
HELLO, CAN I HELP YOU?
HELLO. YES, UH, WE'RE HERE TO VISIT MY, UM, AUNT. GAIL GIBBONS? THIS IS, UH, MY STEP-DAUGHTER.
RECEPTION
OH, GAIL. SUCH A SWEET LADY.
I DIDN'T KNOW SHE HAD ANY RELATIVES LEFT! JUST SIGN IN AND FOLLOW THE HALL TO THE LEFT. SHE'S IN ROOM 308.
300
SWEET LADY?
EXACTLY *HOW MUCH* WAS REALITY REWRITTEN?
308
KNOCK KNOCK
HEADS UP, BLONDIE. WE'RE HERE TO SPRING YOU.
GAIL?

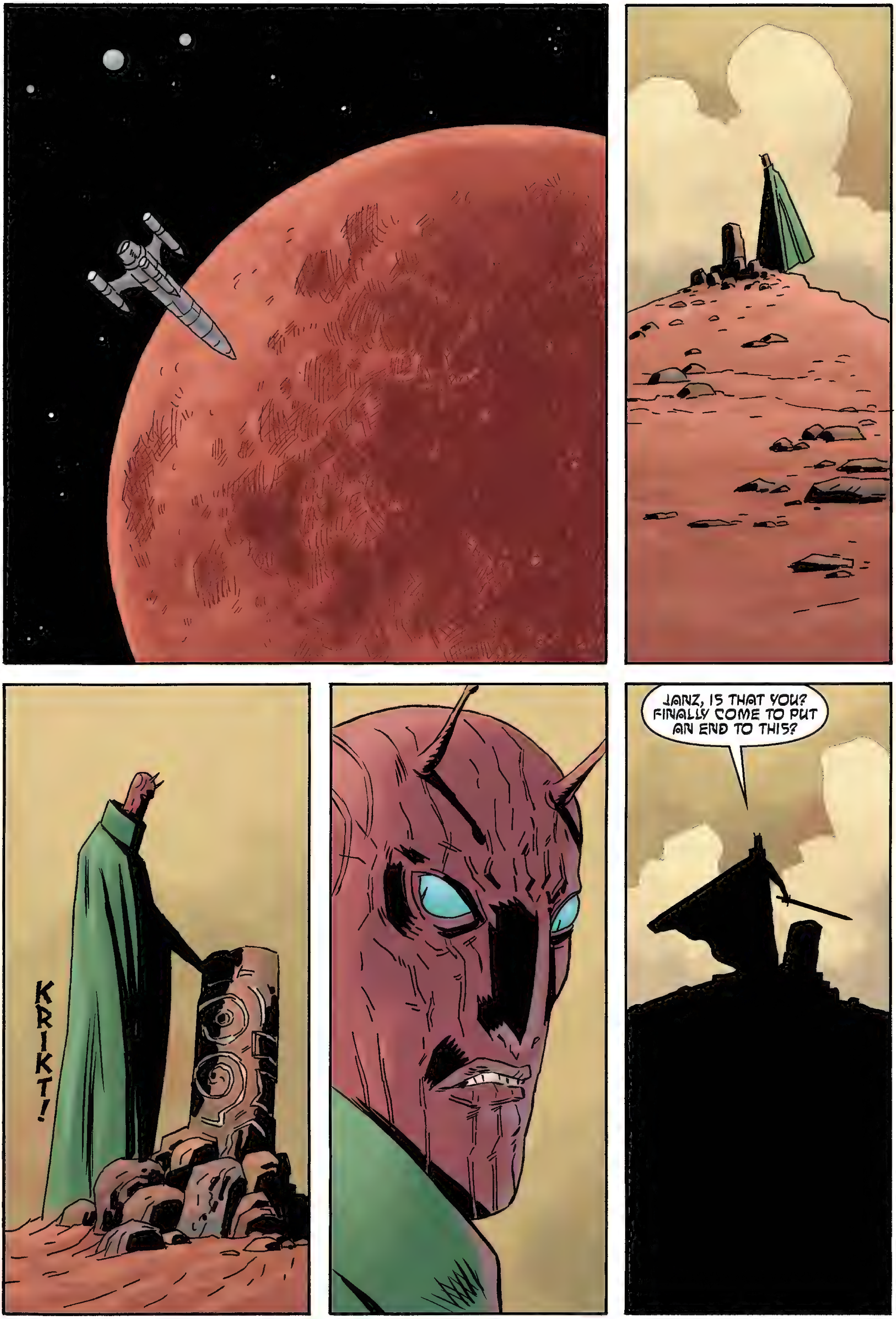

GAIL? IT'S...IT'S US.
MAYBE HER HEARING IS BAD?
I DON'T--
GAIL?
OH NO.

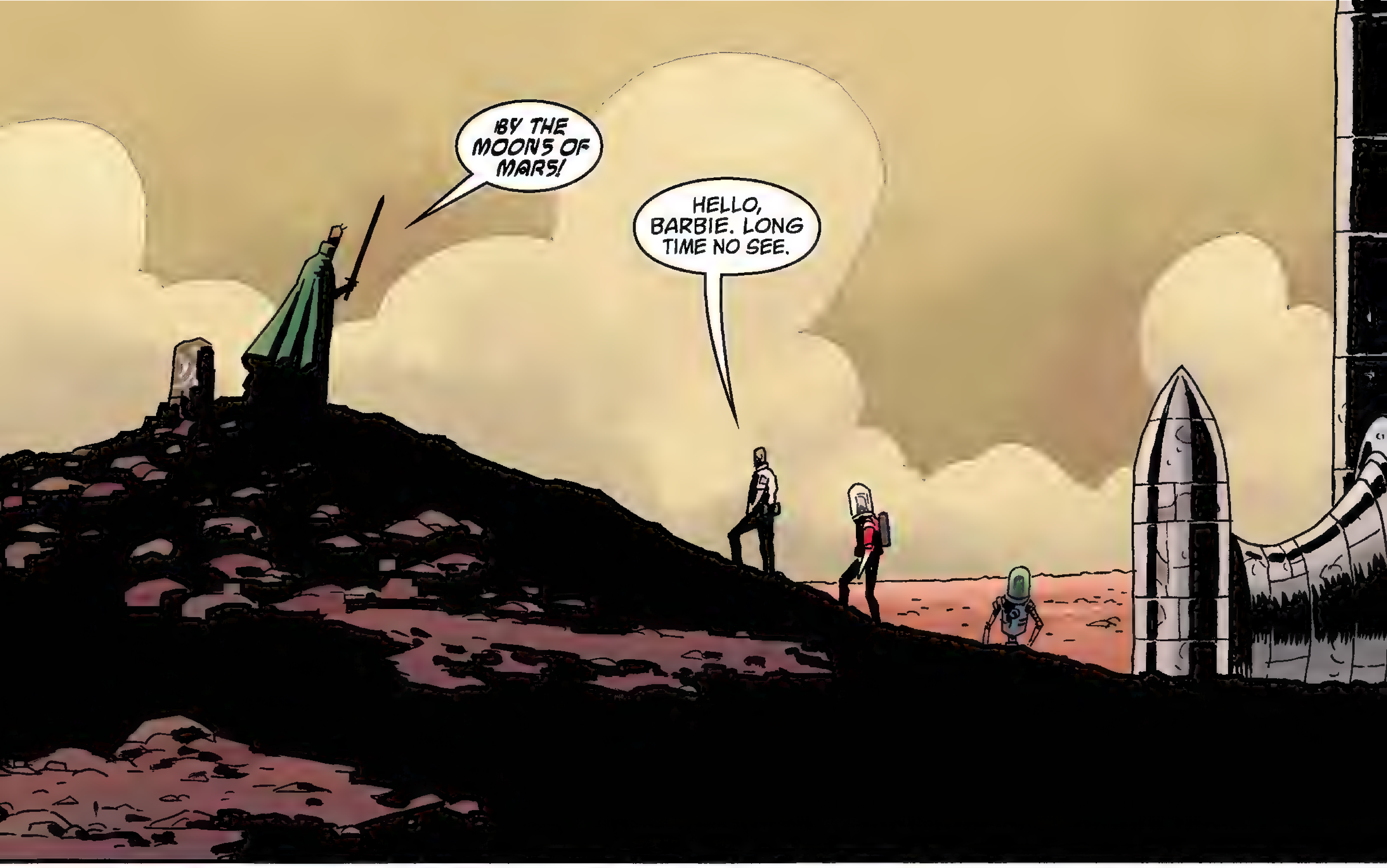

GAIL! IT'S ME! IT'S ABE.
SNAP!
FIX HER, LUCY.
ABE, I THINK MAYBE--I THINK SHE'S GONE. SHE'S *SO OLD.* MAYBE IT'S ALZHEIMER'S OR--
FIX HER!
I-- I CAN *TRY.*

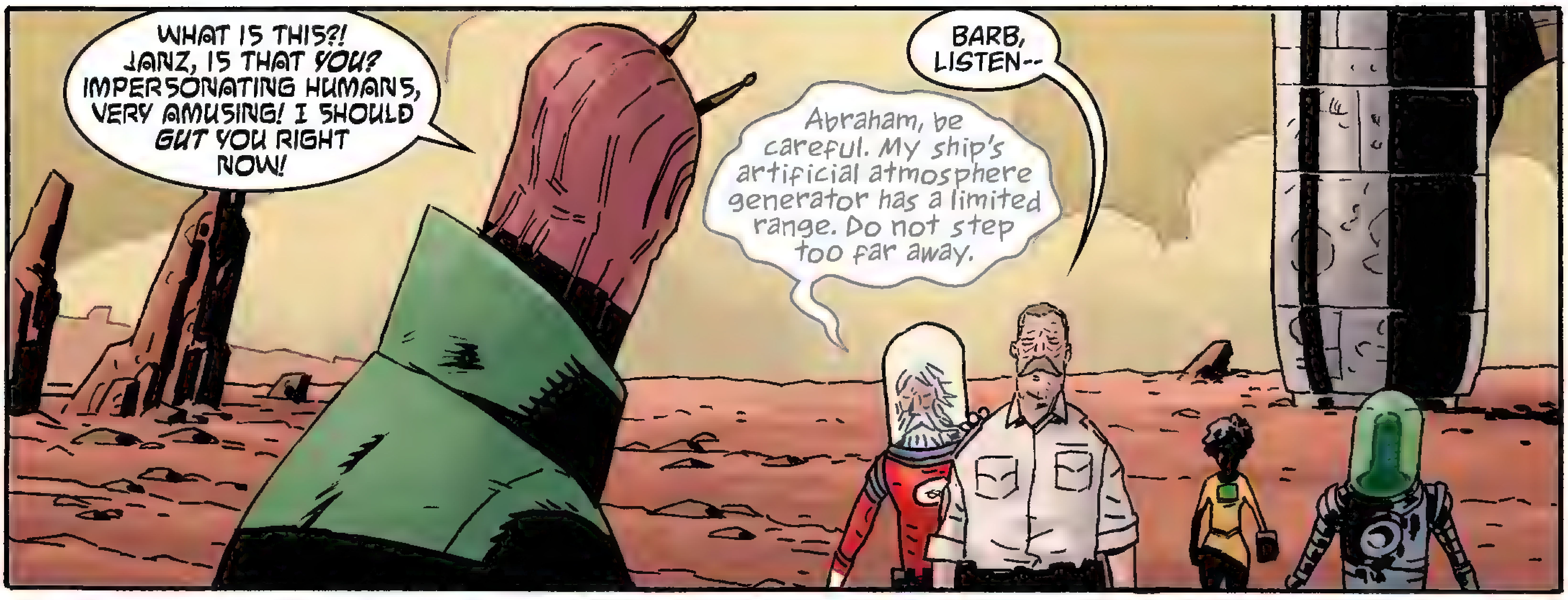

NOTHING.
IT DIDN'T WORK WHEN *I* JUST TOUCHED IT EITHER!
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO, ABE? ***HIT HER ACROSS THE HEAD*** WITH THE HAMMER LIKE I DID WITH YOU?
OF COURSE NOT, I JUST-- ***DAMN IT!***
LISTEN UP, LITTLE MISSY. I--I GOTTA THINK SOMEWHERE IN THERE YOU CAN STILL HEAR ME. AND--WELL, WE ARE ALL IN A ***BIG HEAP*** OF TROUBLE.
AND...I NEED YOU, GAIL. I NEED YOUR HELP. SO, YOU GOTTA DO SOMETHING FOR ME. I NEED YOU TO ***SAY IT.***
SAY IT, GAIL...SAY ***ZAFRAM.***
...SHE'S GONE.
WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?
WELL, WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE HER HERE LIKE THIS.

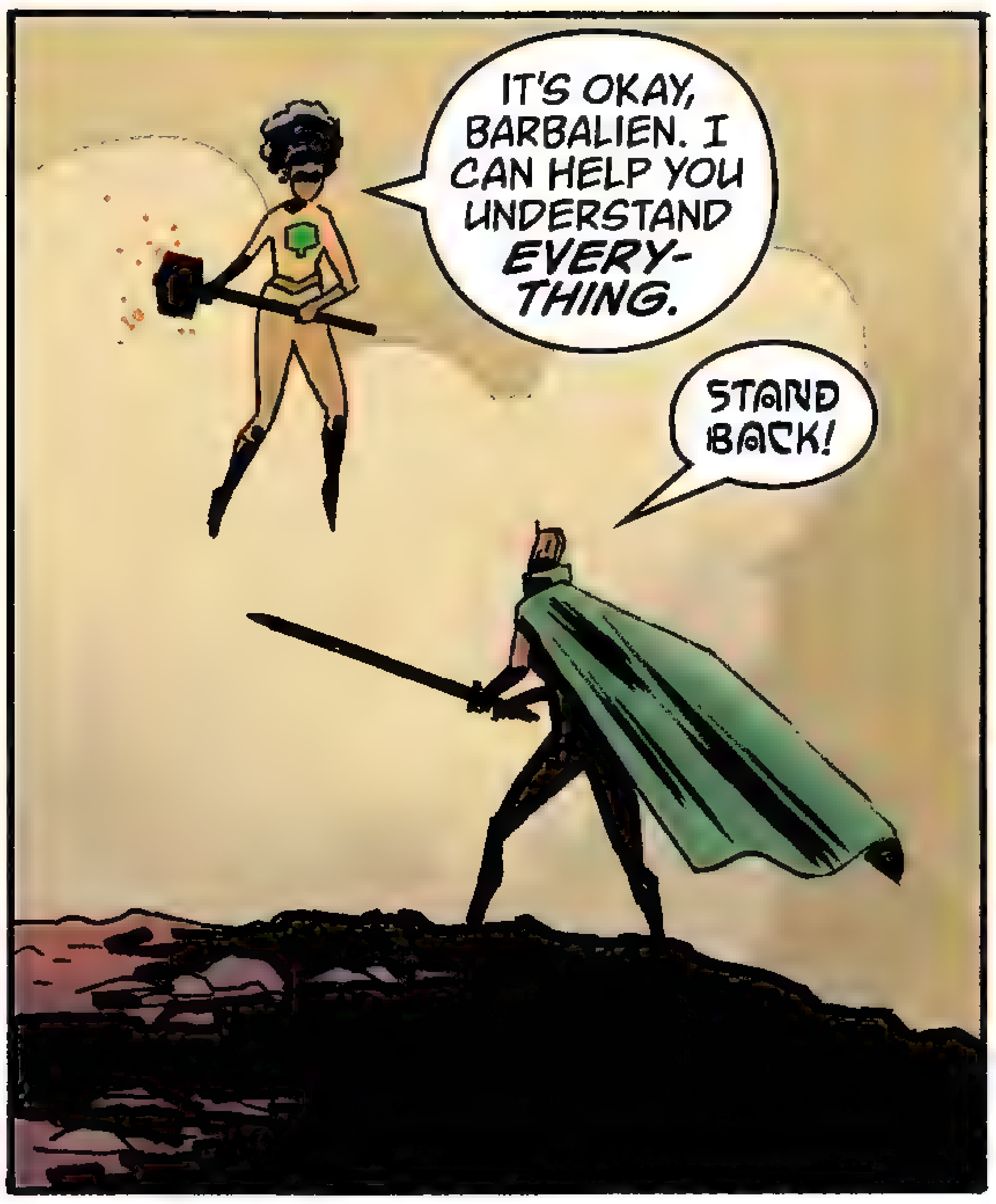

TALKY, START THE DAMN ENGINE!
DODGE
I DON'T HAVE THE KEY-- OH DEAR! THIS IS--THIS IS MOST UNWISE.
SHUT UP AND HELP US!
HEY!!
GO GO GO!!
DRIVE!
SCREEEECH!!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
WHAT WE HAD TO.
I DO NOT THINK WE SHOULD DRAW ANY EXTRA ATTENTION TO OURSELVES.
A LITTLE LATE FOR THAT, TIN CAN.
HOLY FUCK!
SCREEECH!

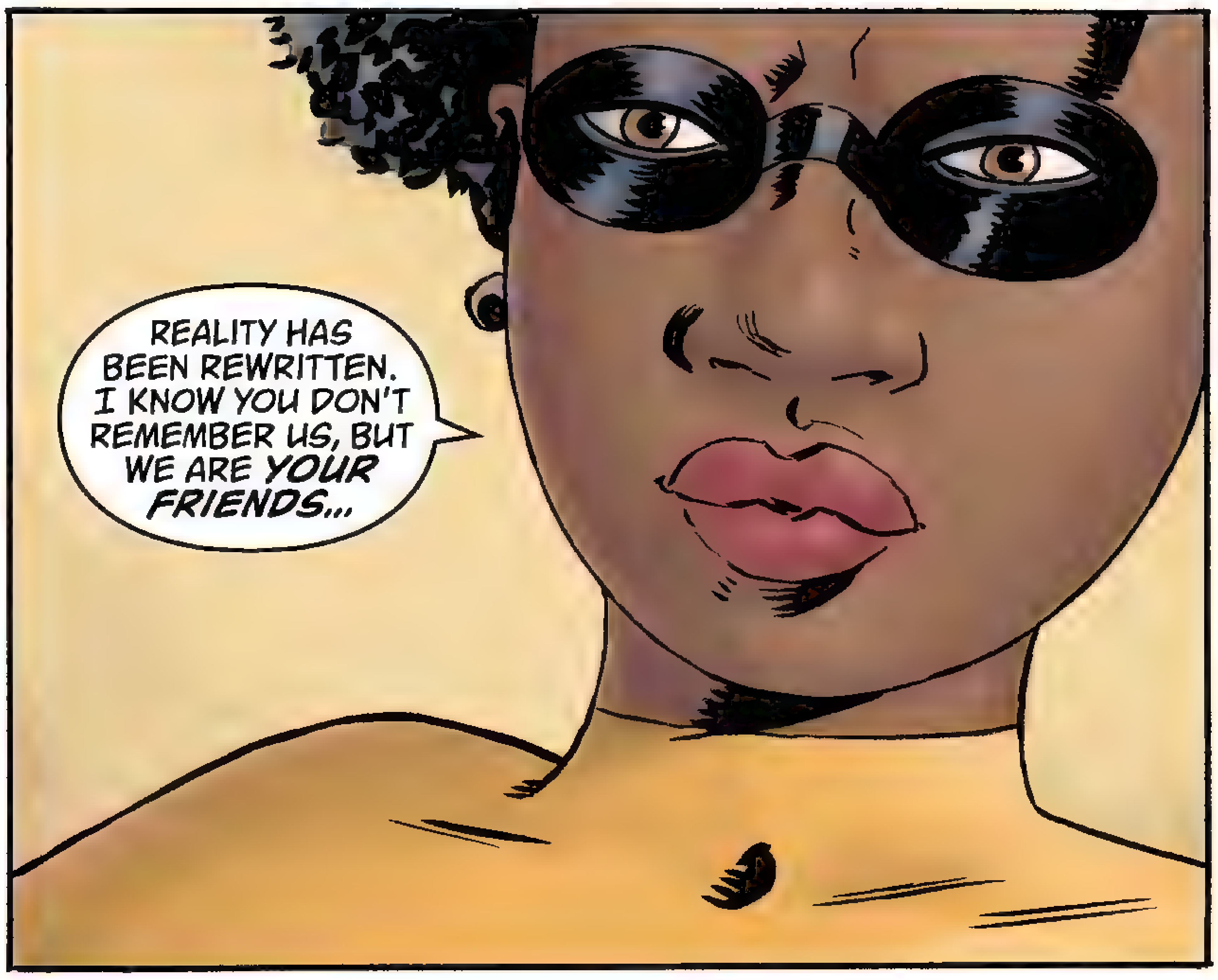
COLONEL?!
There was a talking insect... Inspector Insector... and others...but they never existed...I never existed.
oh, hello, Abraham. It is...it is VERY good to see you again.
COLONEL! I--I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD!
Dead? No. At least I don't think so.
WHAT ARE YOU--WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
Ah yes... now I remember. I--I was ALWAYS going to be here.
This is when I meet you and TAKE YOU TO MARS.

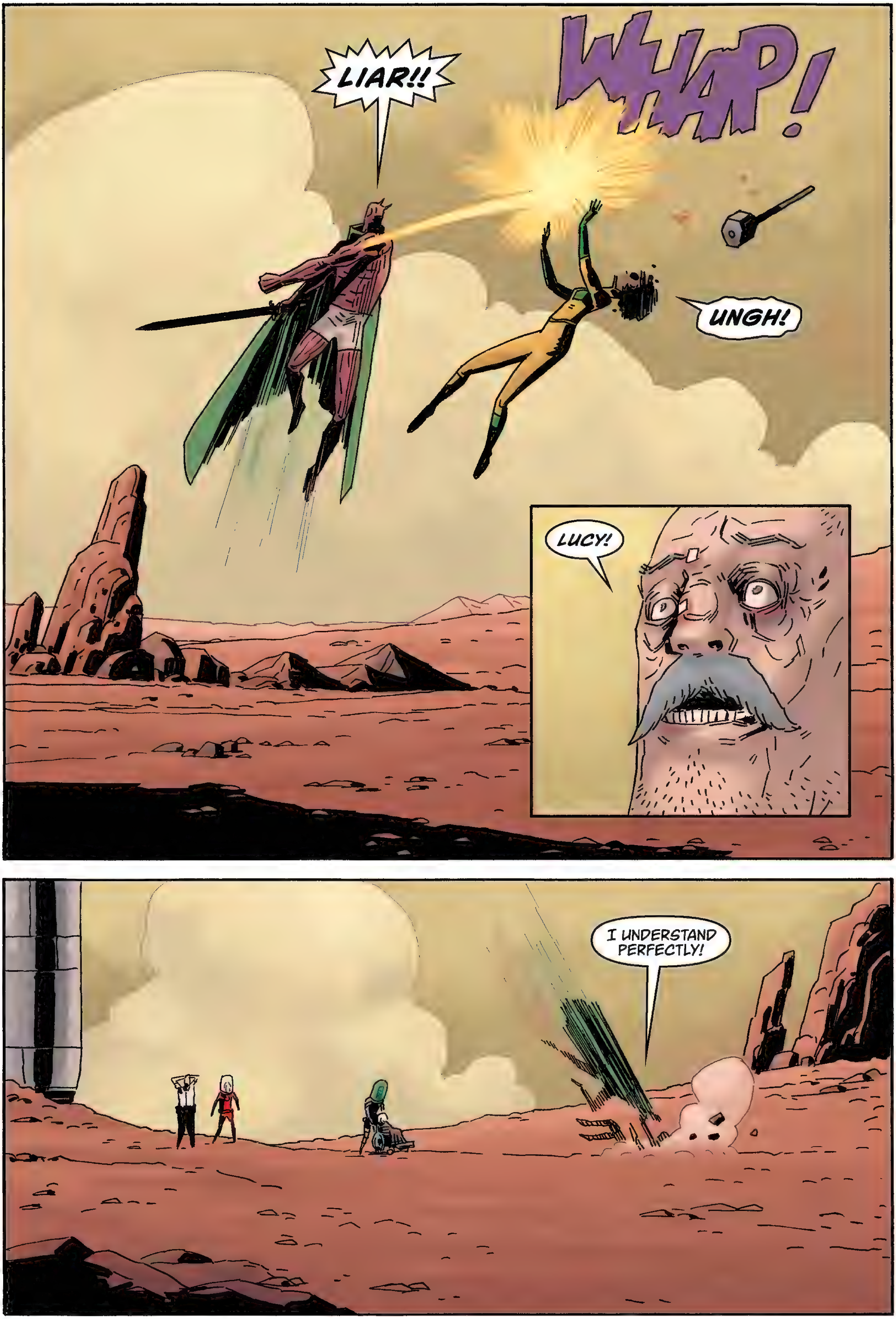

KRIKT!
JANZ, IS THAT YOU? FINALLY COME TO PUT AN END TO THIS?

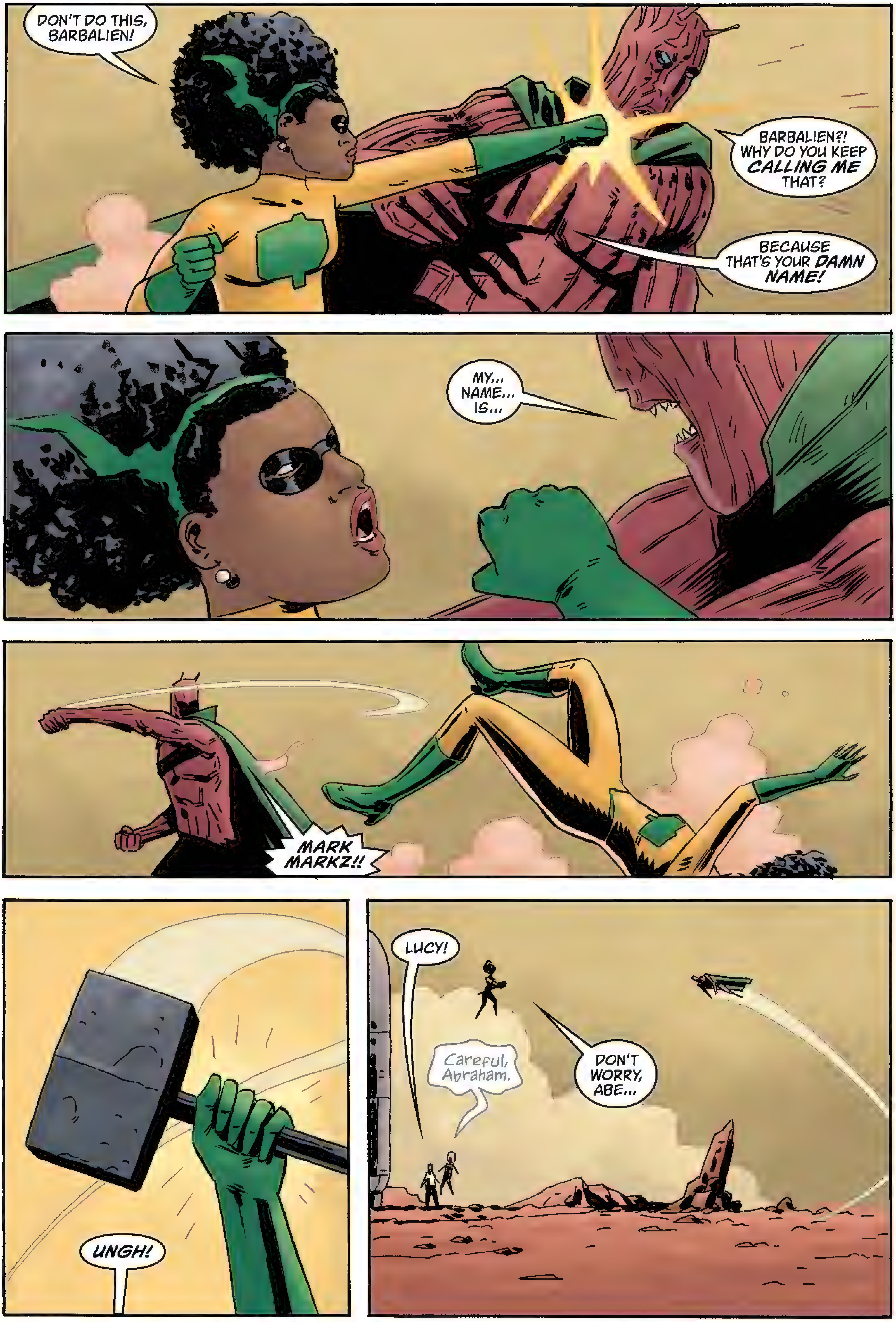

BY THE MOONS OF MARS!
HELLO, BARBIE. LONG TIME NO SEE.

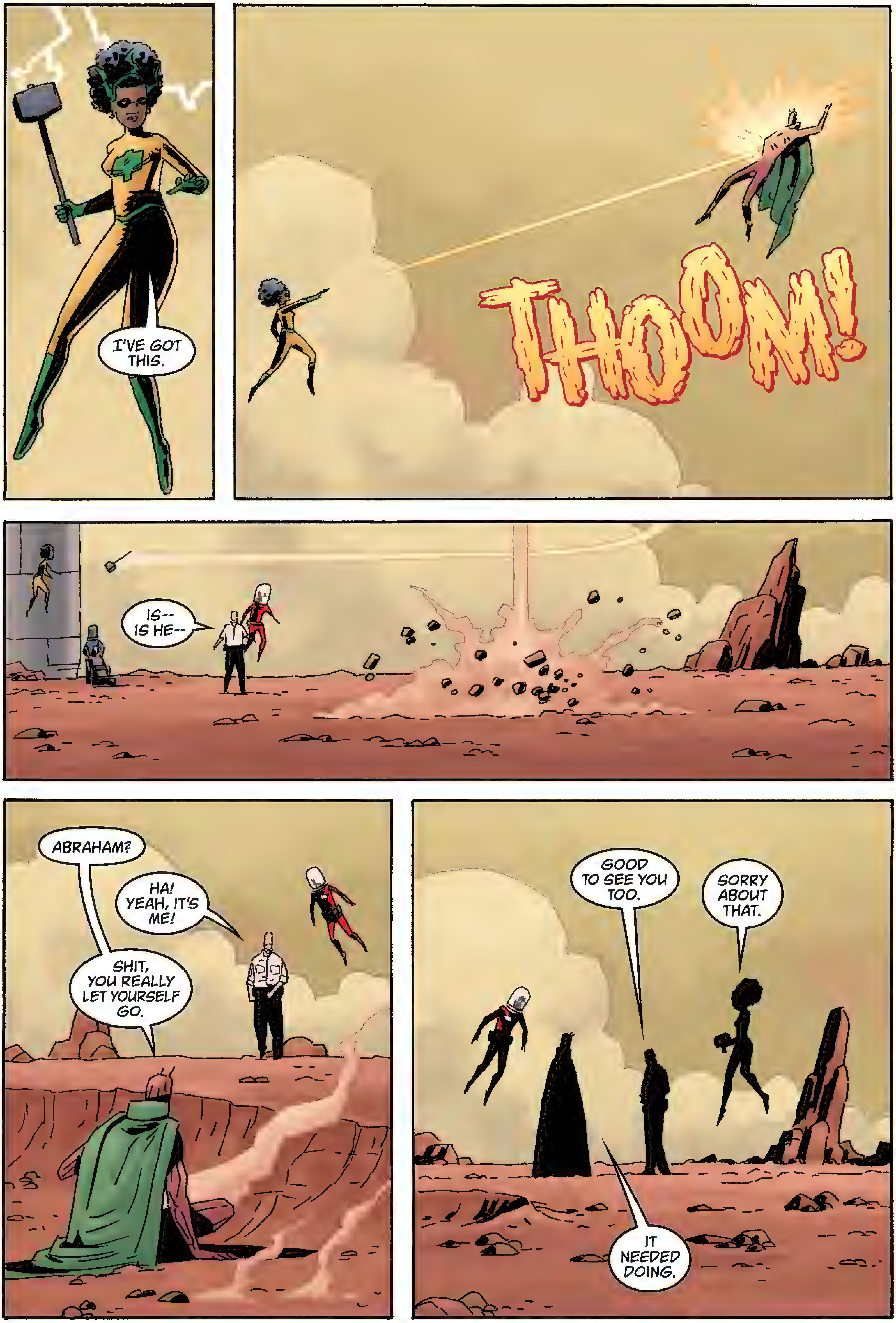

WHAT IS THIS?! JANZ, IS THAT *YOU?* IMPERSONATING HUMANS, VERY AMUSING! I SHOULD *GUT* YOU RIGHT NOW!
BARB, LISTEN--
Abraham, be careful. My ship's artificial atmosphere generator has a limited range. Do not step too far away.

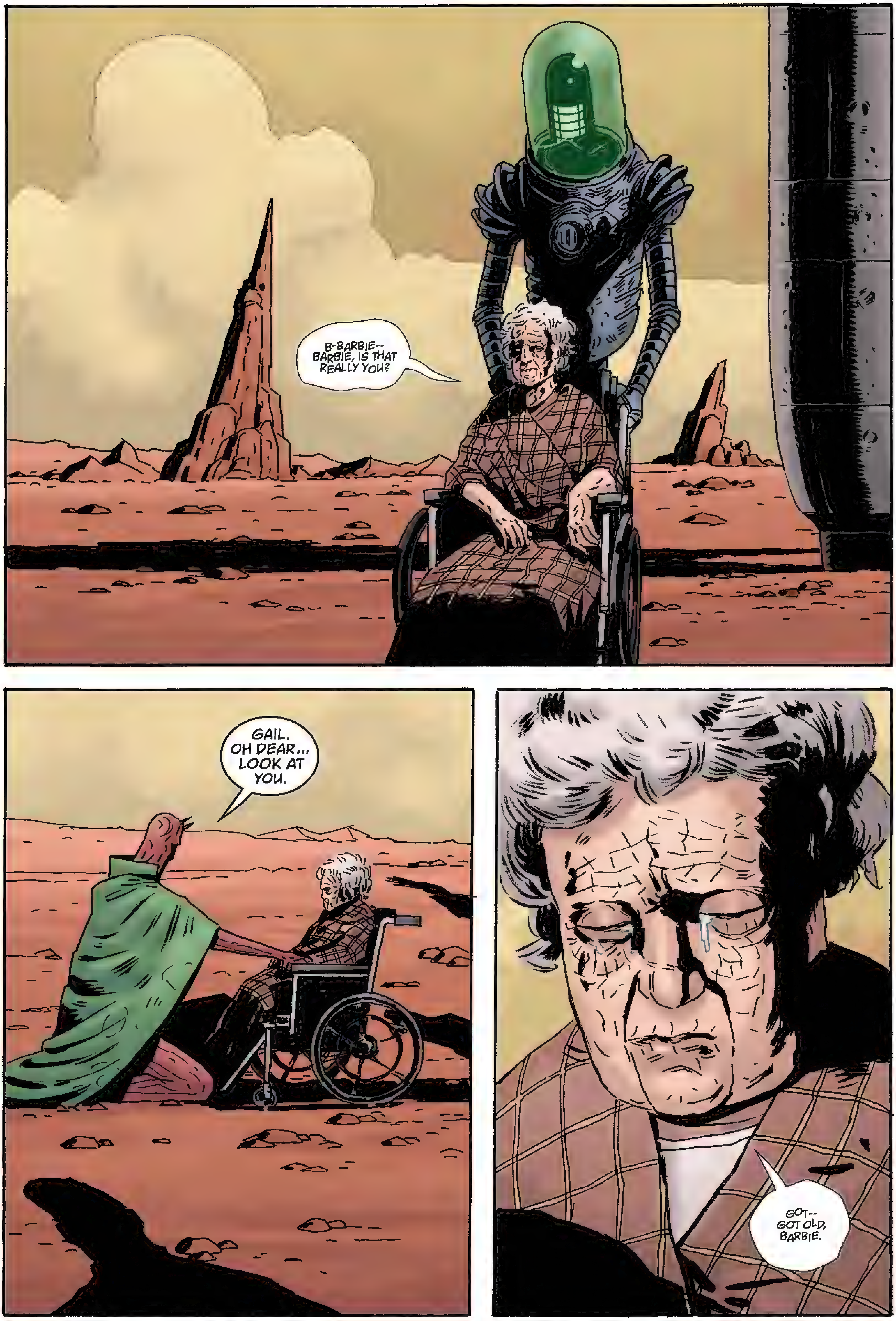

IT'S OKAY, BARBALIEN. I CAN HELP YOU UNDERSTAND *EVERYTHING.*
STAND BACK!

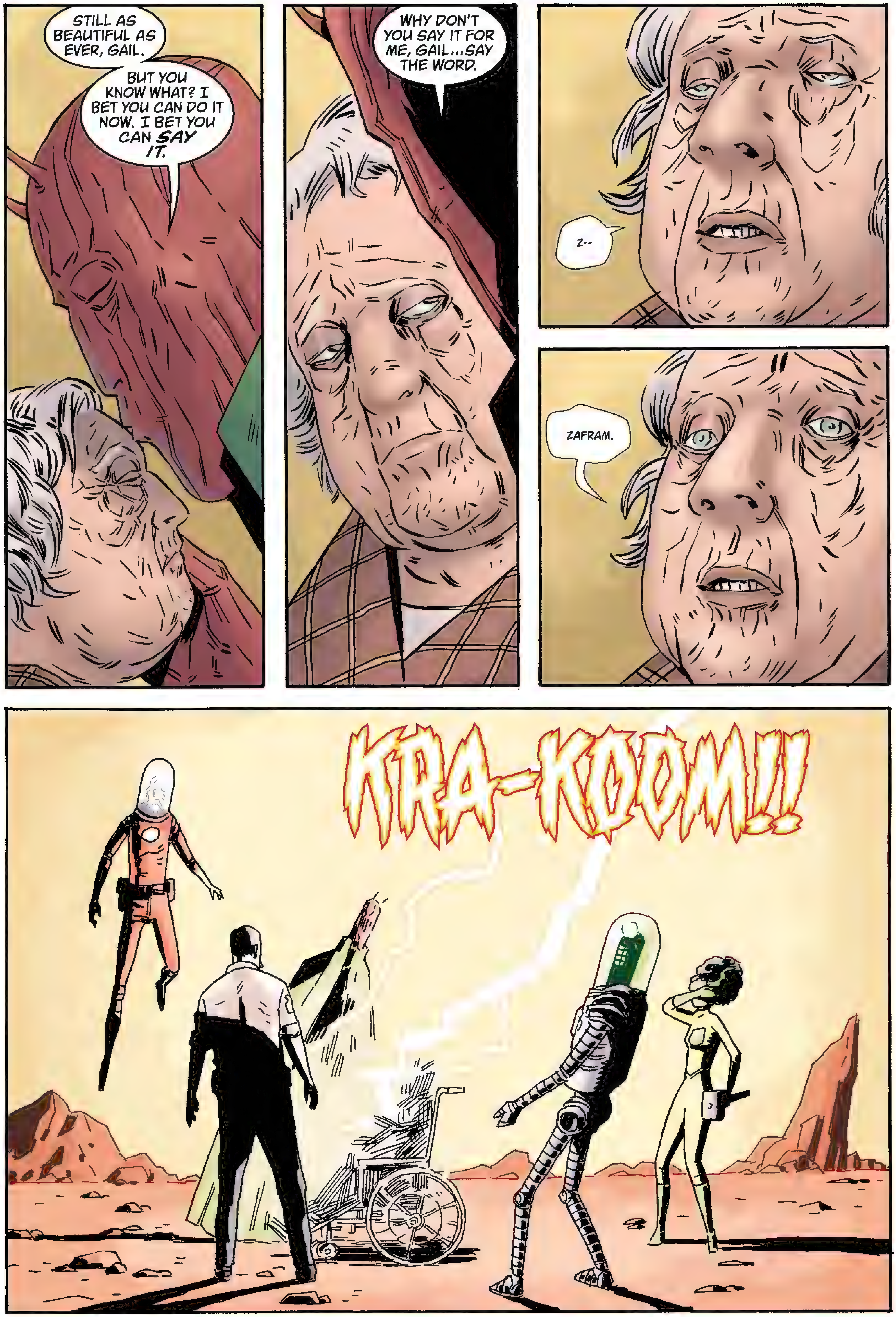

REALITY HAS BEEN REWRITTEN. I KNOW YOU DON'T REMEMBER US, BUT WE ARE *YOUR FRIENDS...*

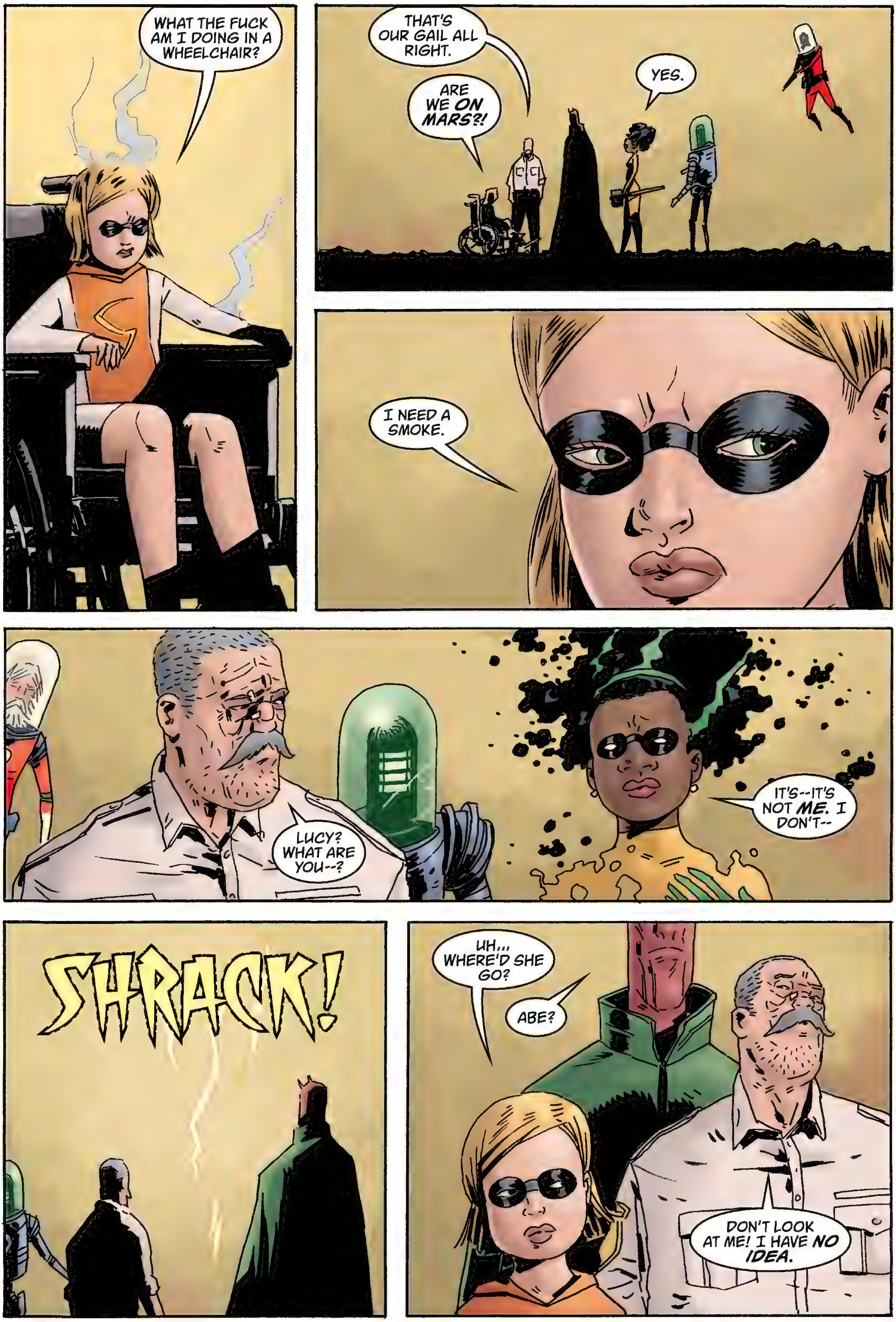

LIAR!!
WHAP!
UNGH!
LUCY!
I UNDERSTAND PERFECTLY!


DON'T DO THIS, BARBALIEN!
BARBALIEN?! WHY DO YOU KEEP *CALLING ME* THAT?
BECAUSE THAT'S YOUR *DAMN NAME!*
MY... NAME... IS...
MARK MARKZ!!
UNGH!
LUCY!
Careful, Abraham.
DON'T WORRY, ABE...

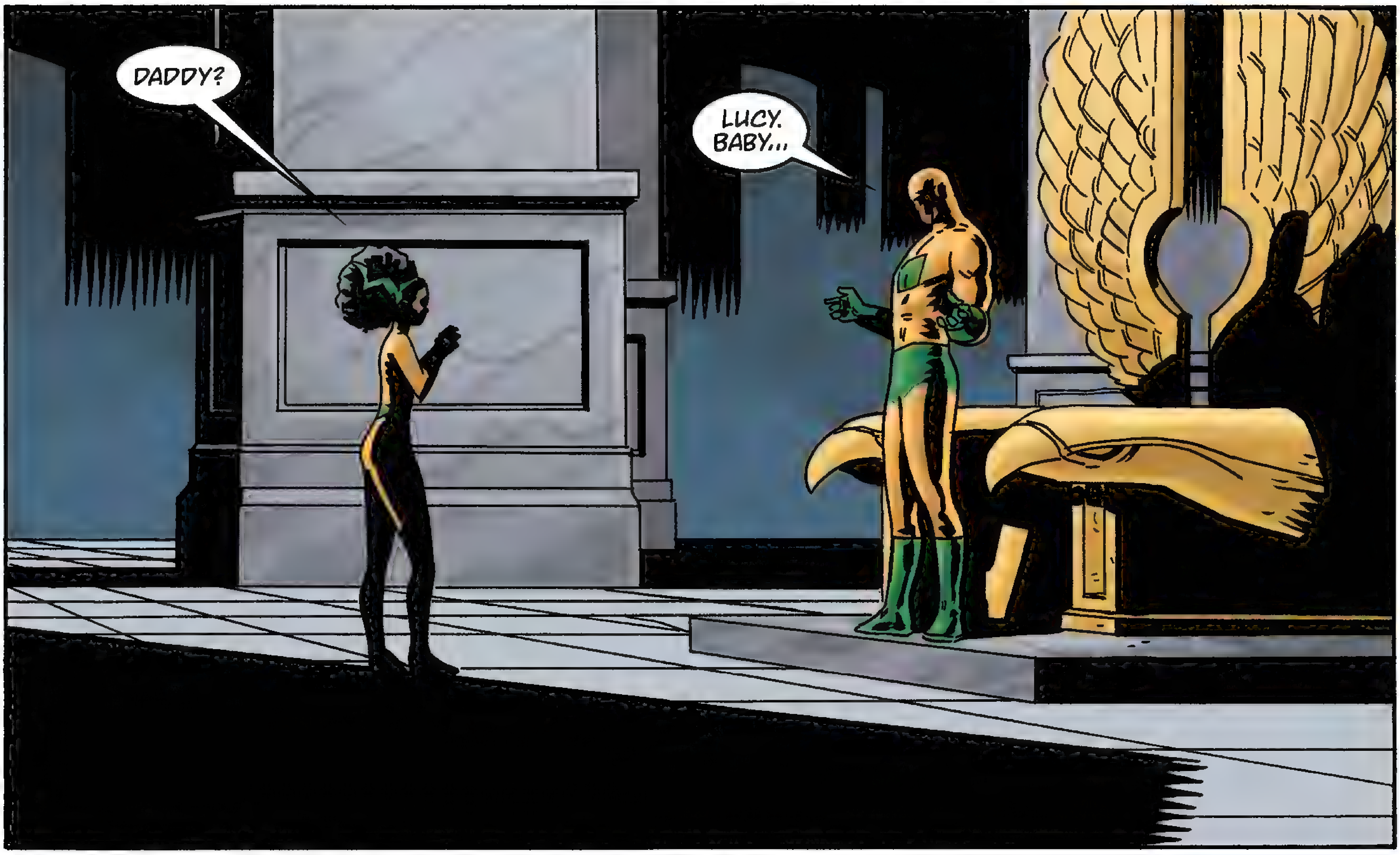

I'VE GOT THIS.
THOOM!
IS-- IS HE--
ABRAHAM?
HA! YEAH, IT'S ME!
SHIT, YOU REALLY LET YOURSELF GO.
GOOD TO SEE YOU TOO.
SORRY ABOUT THAT.
IT NEEDED DOING.

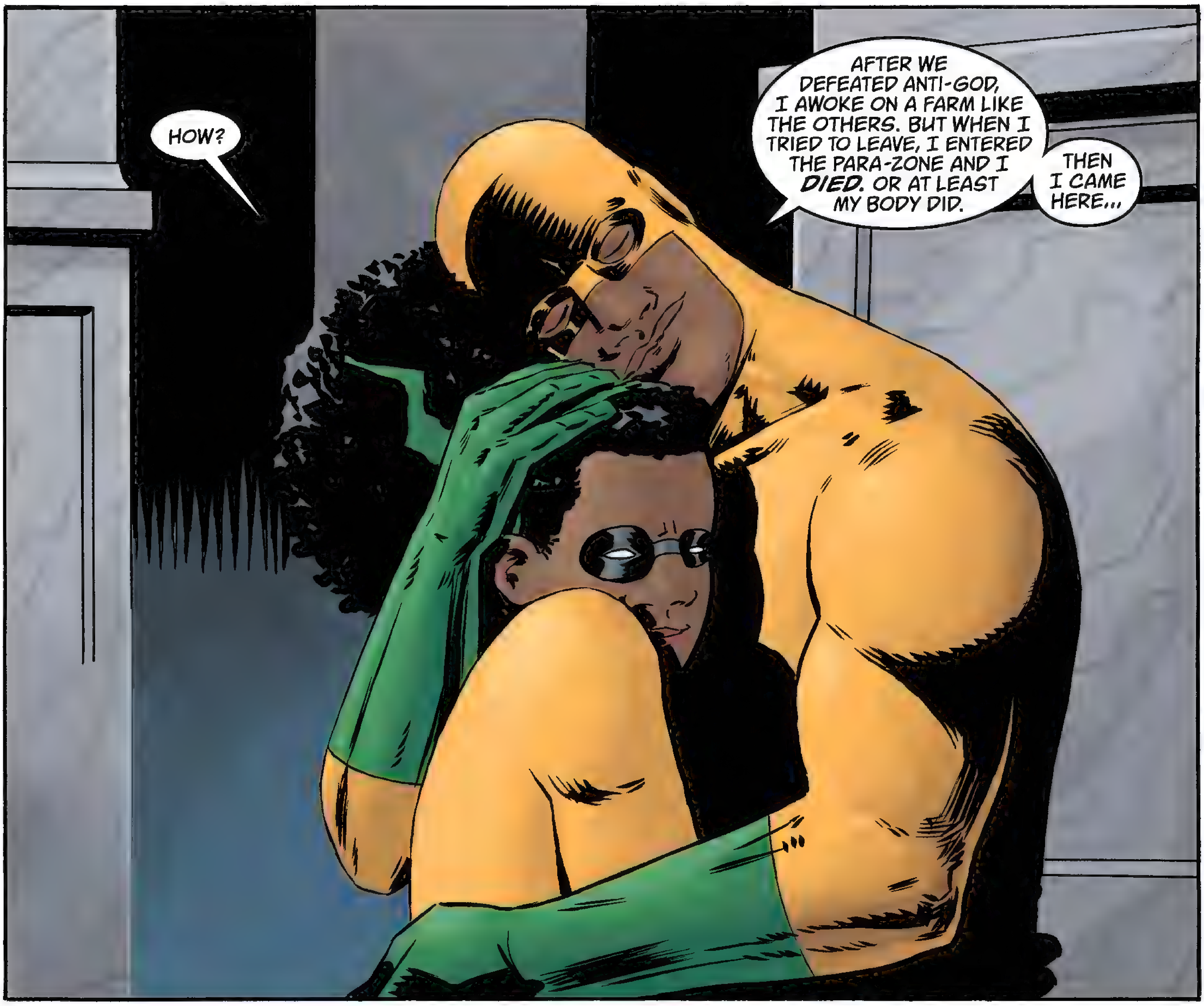

B-BARBIE-- BARBIE, IS THAT REALLY YOU?
GAIL. OH DEAR... LOOK AT YOU.
GOT-- GOT OLD, BARBIE.


STILL AS BEAUTIFUL AS EVER, GAIL.
BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? I BET YOU CAN DO IT NOW. I BET YOU CAN *SAY IT.*
WHY DON'T YOU SAY IT FOR ME, GAIL... SAY THE WORD.
Z--
ZAFRAM.
KRA-KOOM!!

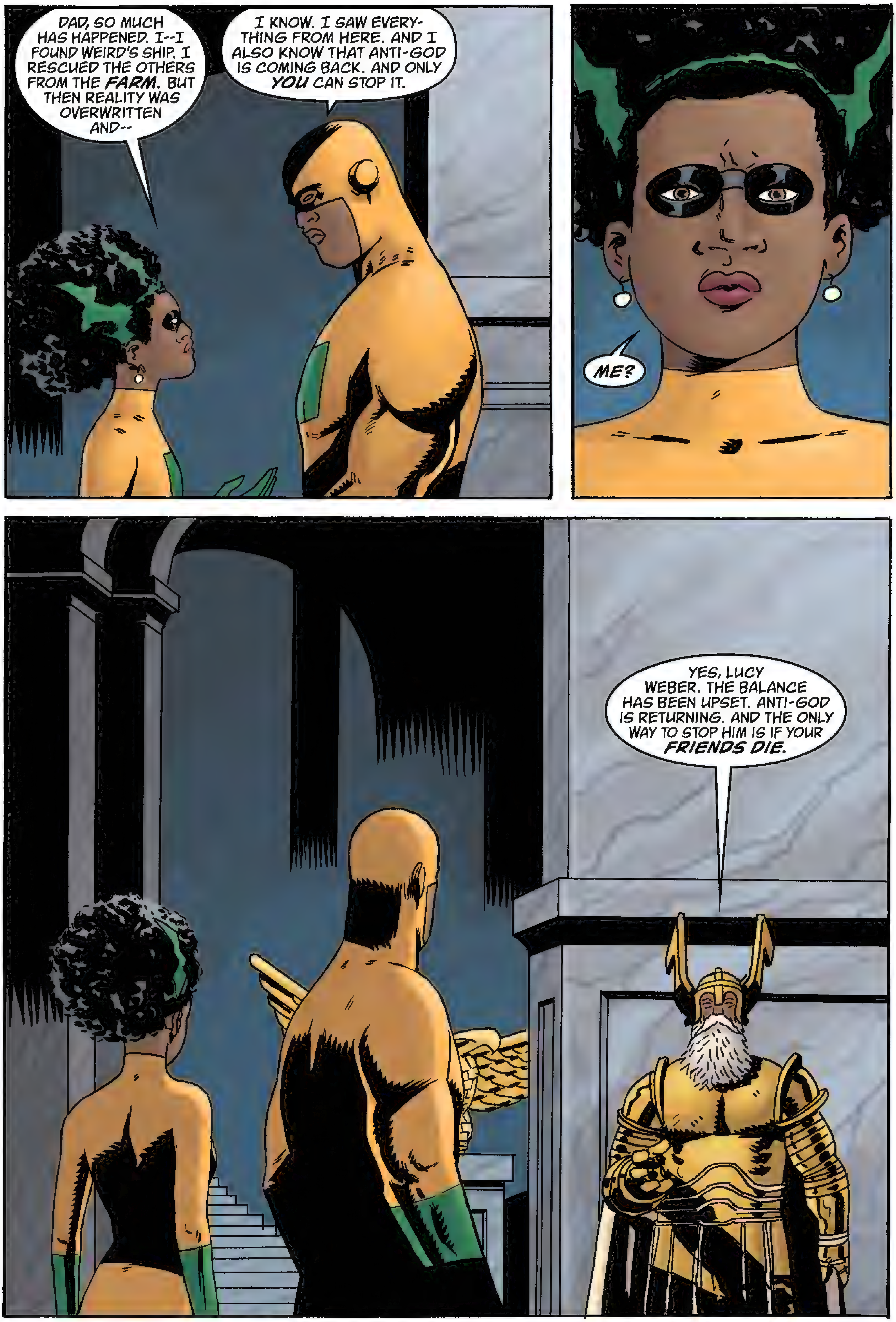

WHAT THE FUCK AM I DOING IN A WHEELCHAIR?
THAT'S OUR GAIL ALL RIGHT.
ARE WE ON MARS?!
YES.
I NEED A SMOKE.
LUCY? WHAT ARE YOU--?
IT'S--IT'S NOT ME. I DON'T--
SHRACK!
UH... WHERE'D SHE GO?
ABE?
DON'T LOOK AT ME! I HAVE NO IDEA.

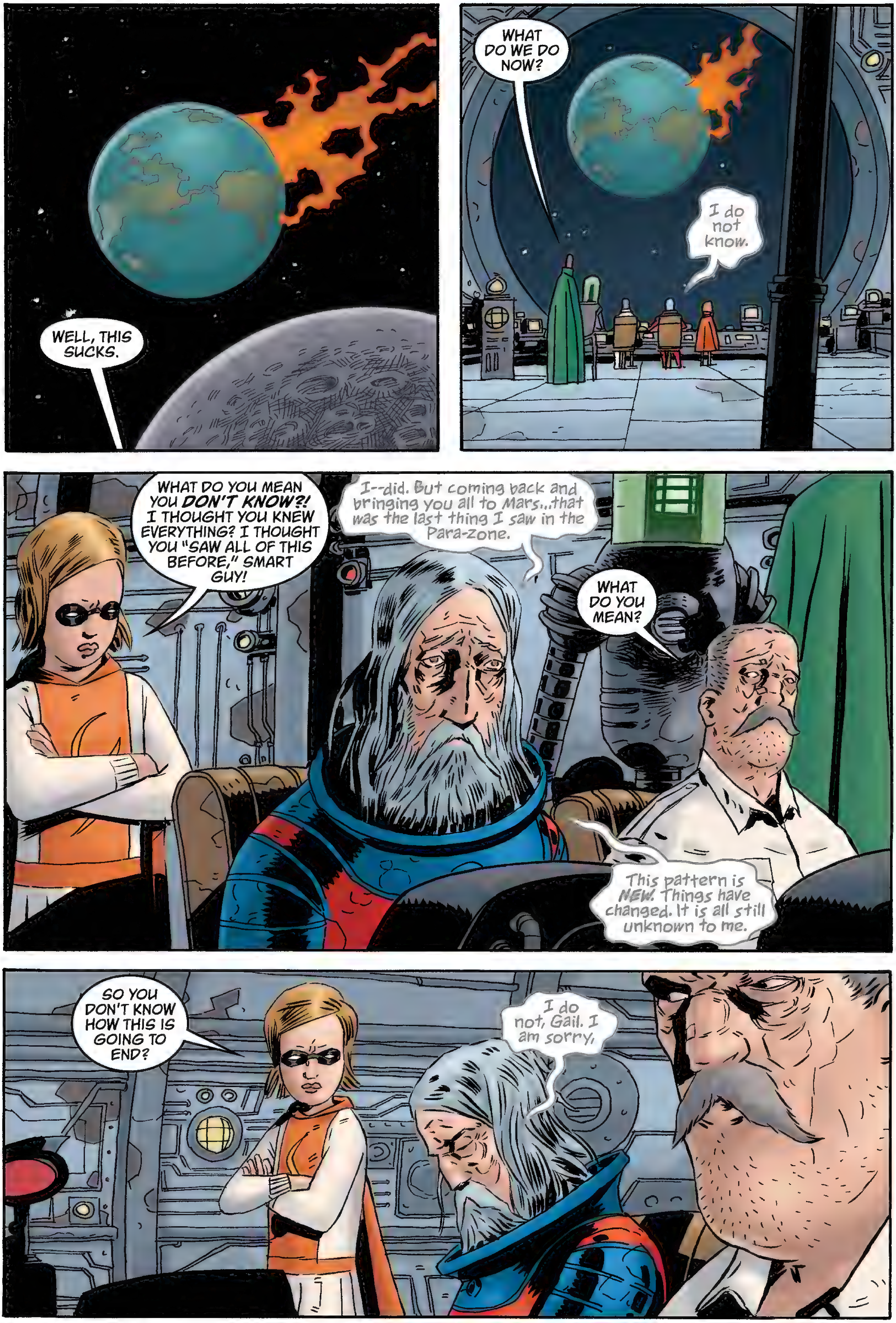
WHAT?! WHERE--
YOU ARE HOME, BLACK HAMMER.
NO!
DADDY?!
HELLO, LUCY. I'VE MISSED YOU.

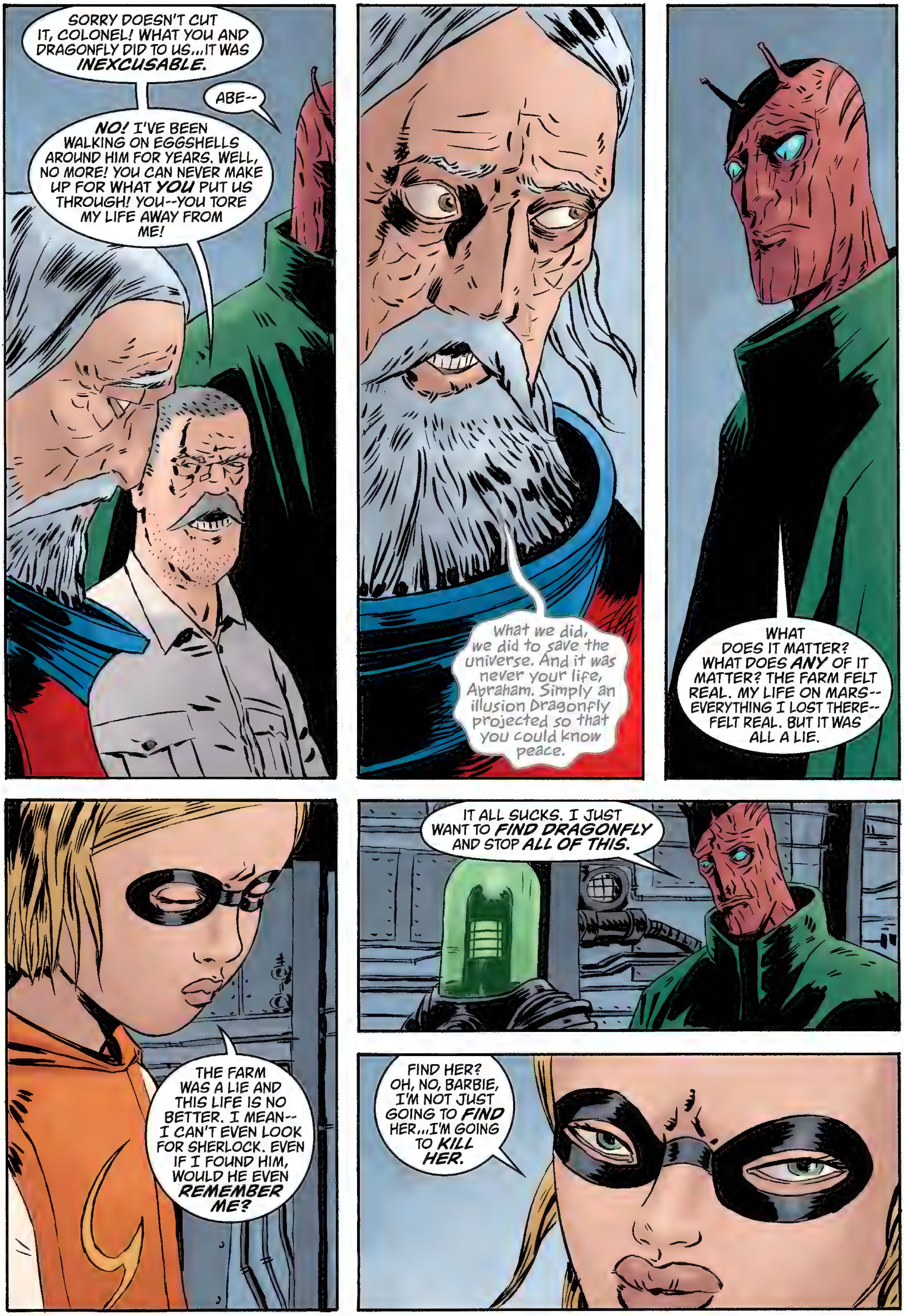

DADDY?
LUCY. BABY...

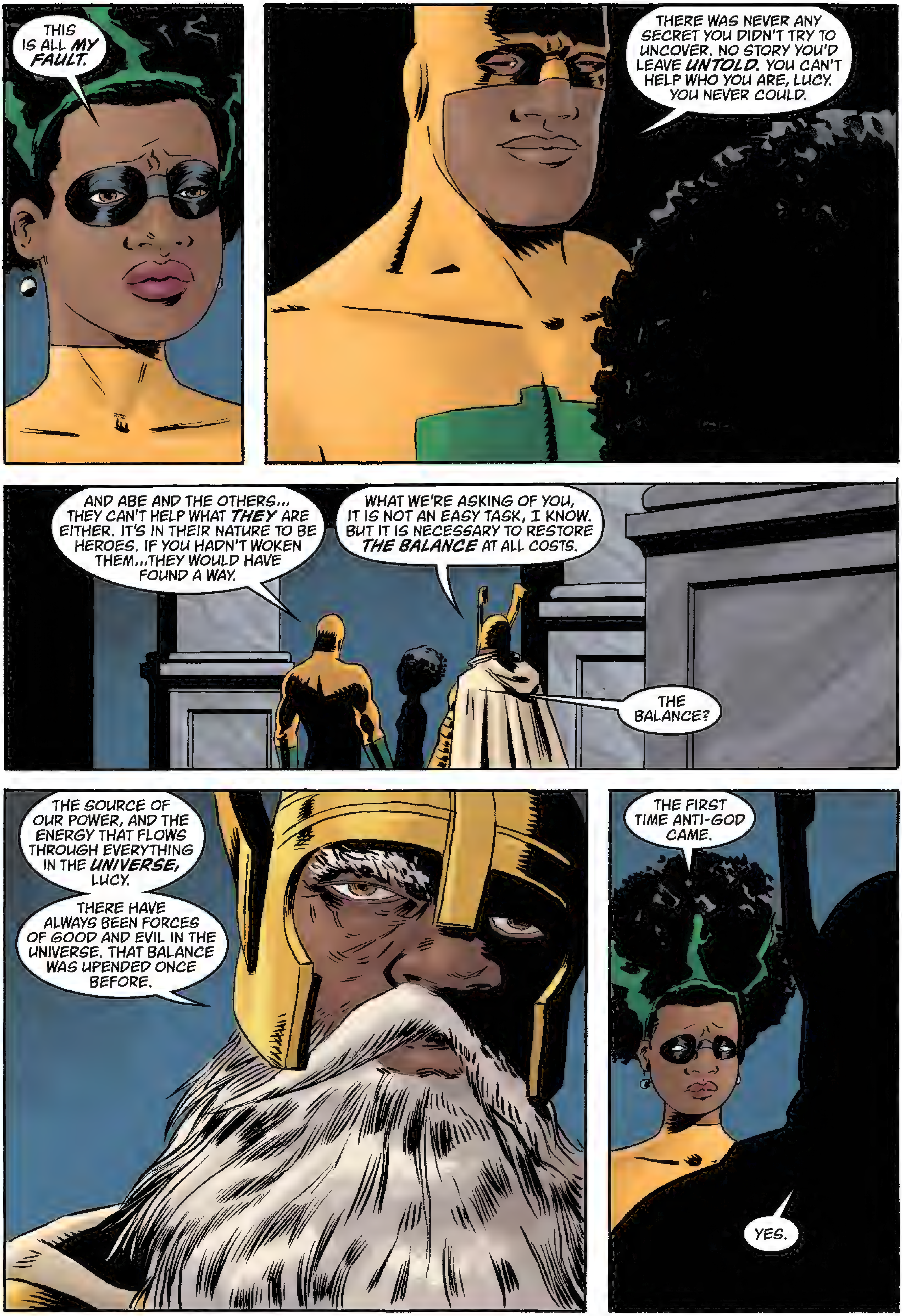

HOW?
AFTER WE DEFEATED ANTI-GOD, I AWOKE ON A FARM LIKE THE OTHERS. BUT WHEN I TRIED TO LEAVE, I ENTERED THE PARA-ZONE AND I ***DIED.*** OR AT LEAST MY BODY DID.
THEN I CAME HERE...

...I CAME TO ***NEW WORLD.***
OH, DADDY. I MISSED YOU SO MUCH.
I MISSED YOU TOO.
OH MY GOD! MOM--WE HAVE TO GO SEE MOM!
I CAN'T, LUCY. MY BODY DIED. MY SPIRIT, MY ***ESSENCE***, IS STILL ALIVE HERE ON NEW WORLD, BUT UNLIKE YOU, I CAN'T COME AND GO ANYMORE.
THAT REALLY SUCKS.
IT COULD BE WORSE, SWEETIE. AT LEAST ***WE*** CAN STILL SEE EACH OTHER.

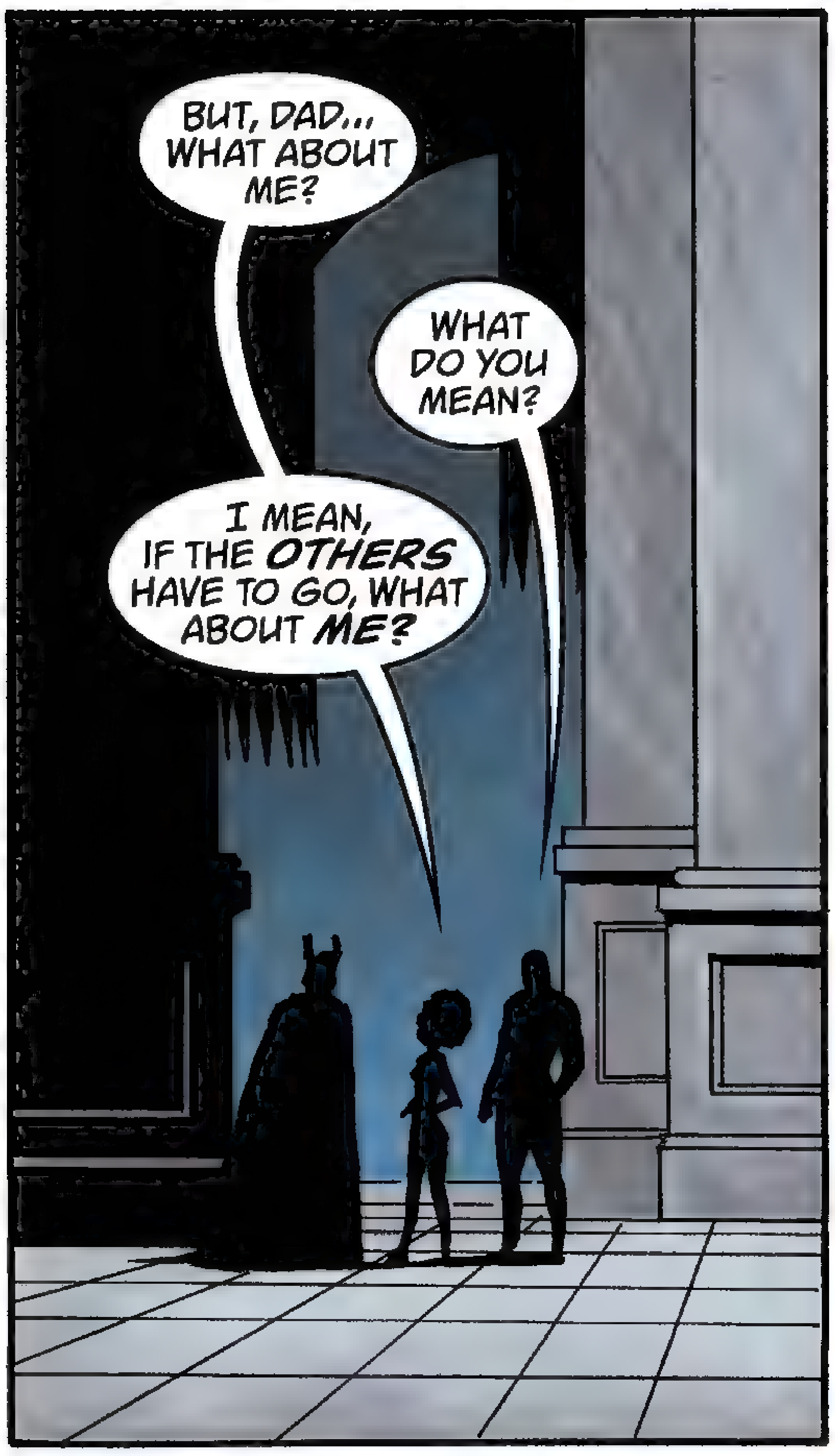

DAD, SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED. I--I FOUND WEIRD'S SHIP. I RESCUED THE OTHERS FROM THE ***FARM.*** BUT THEN REALITY WAS OVERWRITTEN AND--
I KNOW. I SAW EVERYTHING FROM HERE. AND I ALSO KNOW THAT ANTI-GOD IS COMING BACK. AND ONLY ***YOU*** CAN STOP IT.
ME?
YES, LUCY WEBER. THE BALANCE HAS BEEN UPSET. ANTI-GOD IS RETURNING. AND THE ONLY WAY TO STOP HIM IS IF YOUR ***FRIENDS DIE.***

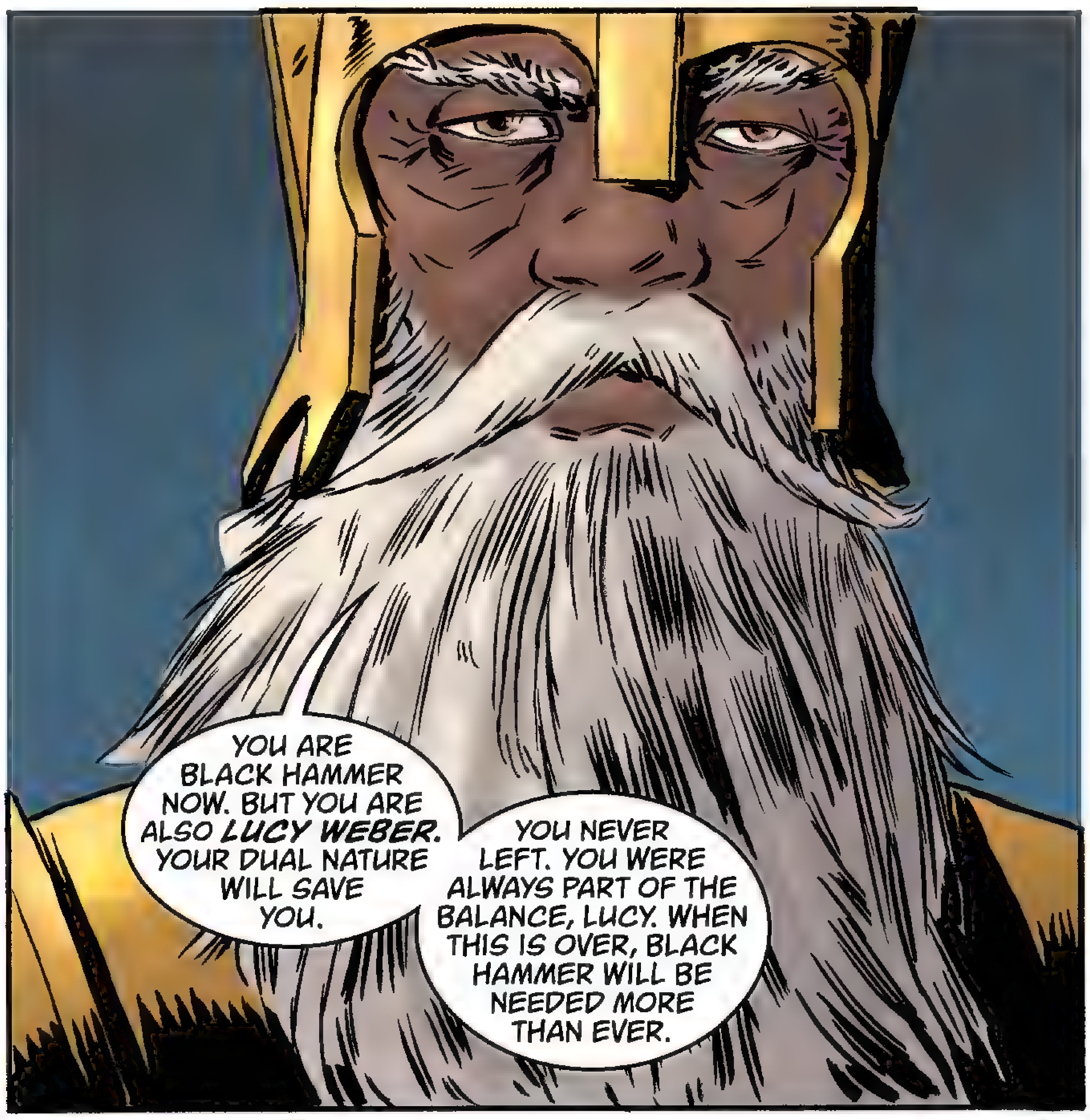

WELL, THIS SUCKS.
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
I do not know.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU ***DON'T KNOW?!*** I THOUGHT YOU KNEW EVERYTHING? I THOUGHT YOU "SAW ALL OF THIS BEFORE," SMART GUY!
I--did. But coming back and bringing you all to Mars...that was the last thing I saw in the Para-zone.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
This pattern is ***NEW!*** Things have changed. It is all still unknown to me.
SO YOU DON'T KNOW HOW THIS IS GOING TO END?
I do not, Gail. I am sorry.

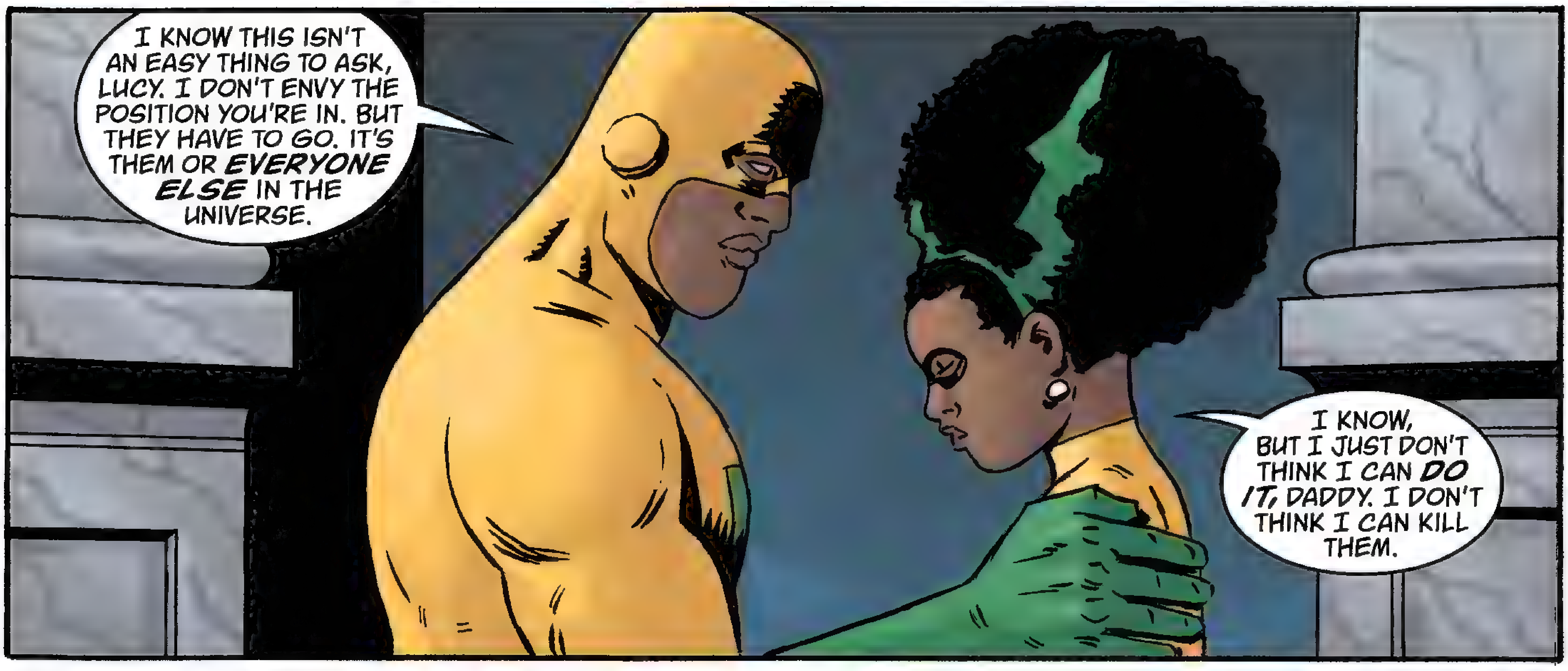

SORRY DOESN'T CUT IT, COLONEL! WHAT YOU AND DRAGONFLY DID TO US...IT WAS *INEXCUSABLE.*
ABE--
NO! I'VE BEEN WALKING ON EGGSHELLS AROUND HIM FOR YEARS. WELL, NO MORE! YOU CAN NEVER MAKE UP FOR WHAT *YOU* PUT US THROUGH! YOU--YOU TORE MY LIFE AWAY FROM ME!
What we did, we did to save the universe. And it was never your life, Abraham. Simply an illusion Dragonfly projected so that you could know peace.
WHAT DOES IT MATTER? WHAT DOES *ANY* OF IT MATTER? THE FARM FELT REAL. MY LIFE ON MARS--EVERYTHING I LOST THERE--FELT REAL. BUT IT WAS ALL A LIE.
THE FARM WAS A LIE AND THIS LIFE IS NO BETTER. I MEAN--I CAN'T EVEN LOOK FOR SHERLOCK. EVEN IF I FOUND HIM, WOULD HE EVEN *REMEMBER ME?*
IT ALL SUCKS. I JUST WANT TO *FIND DRAGONFLY* AND STOP *ALL OF THIS.*
FIND HER? OH, NO, BARBIE, I'M NOT JUST GOING TO *FIND* HER...I'M GOING TO *KILL HER.*

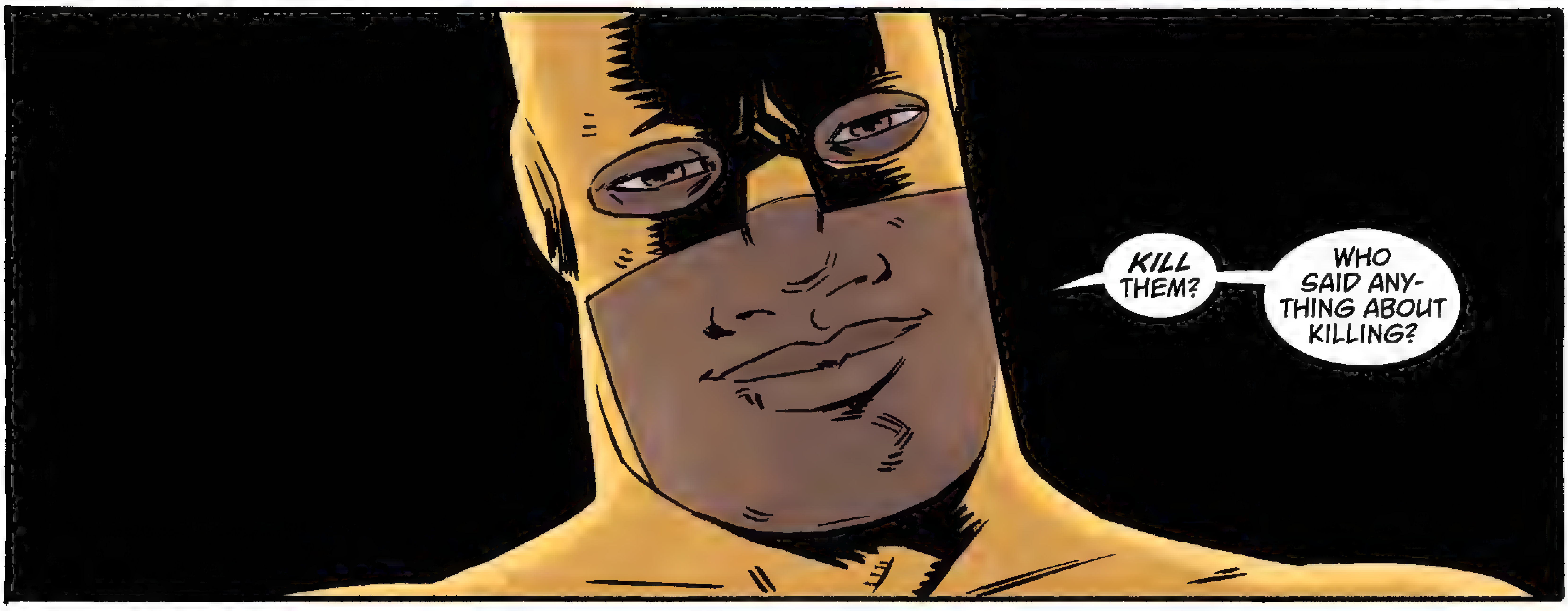

THIS IS ALL *MY FAULT.*
THERE WAS NEVER ANY SECRET YOU DIDN'T TRY TO UNCOVER. NO STORY YOU'D LEAVE *UNTOLD.* YOU CAN'T HELP WHO YOU ARE, LUCY. YOU NEVER COULD.
AND ABE AND THE OTHERS... THEY CAN'T HELP WHAT *THEY* ARE EITHER. IT'S IN THEIR NATURE TO BE HEROES. IF YOU HADN'T WOKEN THEM...THEY WOULD HAVE FOUND A WAY.
WHAT WE'RE ASKING OF YOU, IT IS NOT AN EASY TASK, I KNOW. BUT IT IS NECESSARY TO RESTORE *THE BALANCE* AT ALL COSTS.
THE BALANCE?
THE SOURCE OF OUR POWER, AND THE ENERGY THAT FLOWS THROUGH EVERYTHING IN THE *UNIVERSE,* LUCY.
THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FORCES OF GOOD AND EVIL IN THE UNIVERSE. THAT BALANCE WAS UPENDED ONCE BEFORE.
THE FIRST TIME ANTI-GOD CAME.
YES.

YOUR FATHER AND THE OTHER HEROES STOOD AGAINST HIM AND ***DESTROYED*** HIM. BUT THEY HAD TO GO, TOO, OR THERE WOULD BE NO BALANCE.
BUT NOW THE HEROES HAVE RETURNED. THE FORCES OF GOOD FAR OUTWEIGH THOSE OF EVIL.
SO ANTI-GOD IS RETURNING TO RESTORE THAT BALANCE?
YES. UNLESS ABE AND THE OTHERS ***GO*** AGAIN BEFORE ANTI-GOD CAN FULLY MANIFEST.
AND TIME IS RUNNING OUT. EVEN NOW ANTI-GOD BECOMES MORE AND ***MORE*** TANGIBLE.

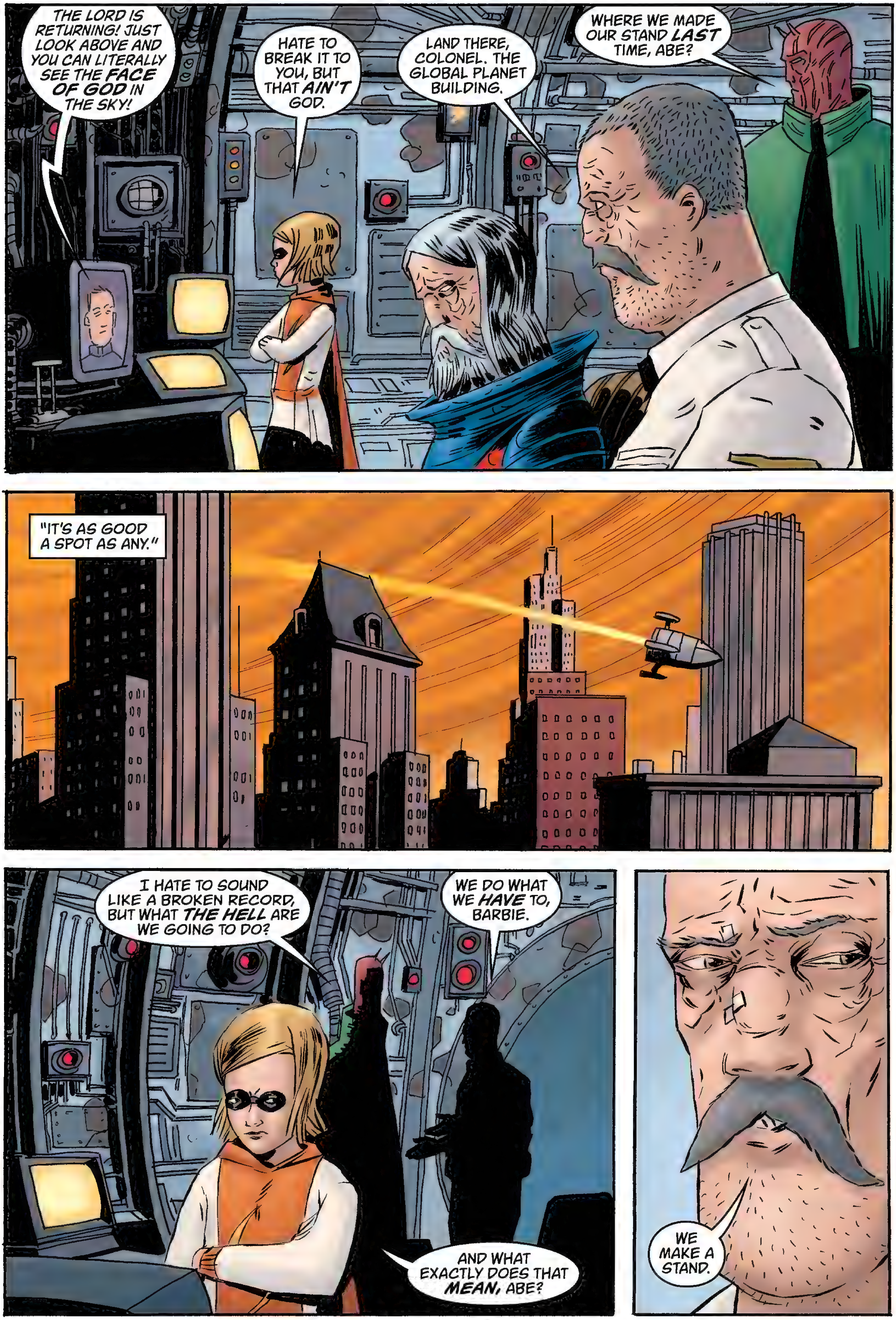

BUT, DAD... WHAT ABOUT ME?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I MEAN, IF THE ***OTHERS*** HAVE TO GO, WHAT ABOUT ***ME?***

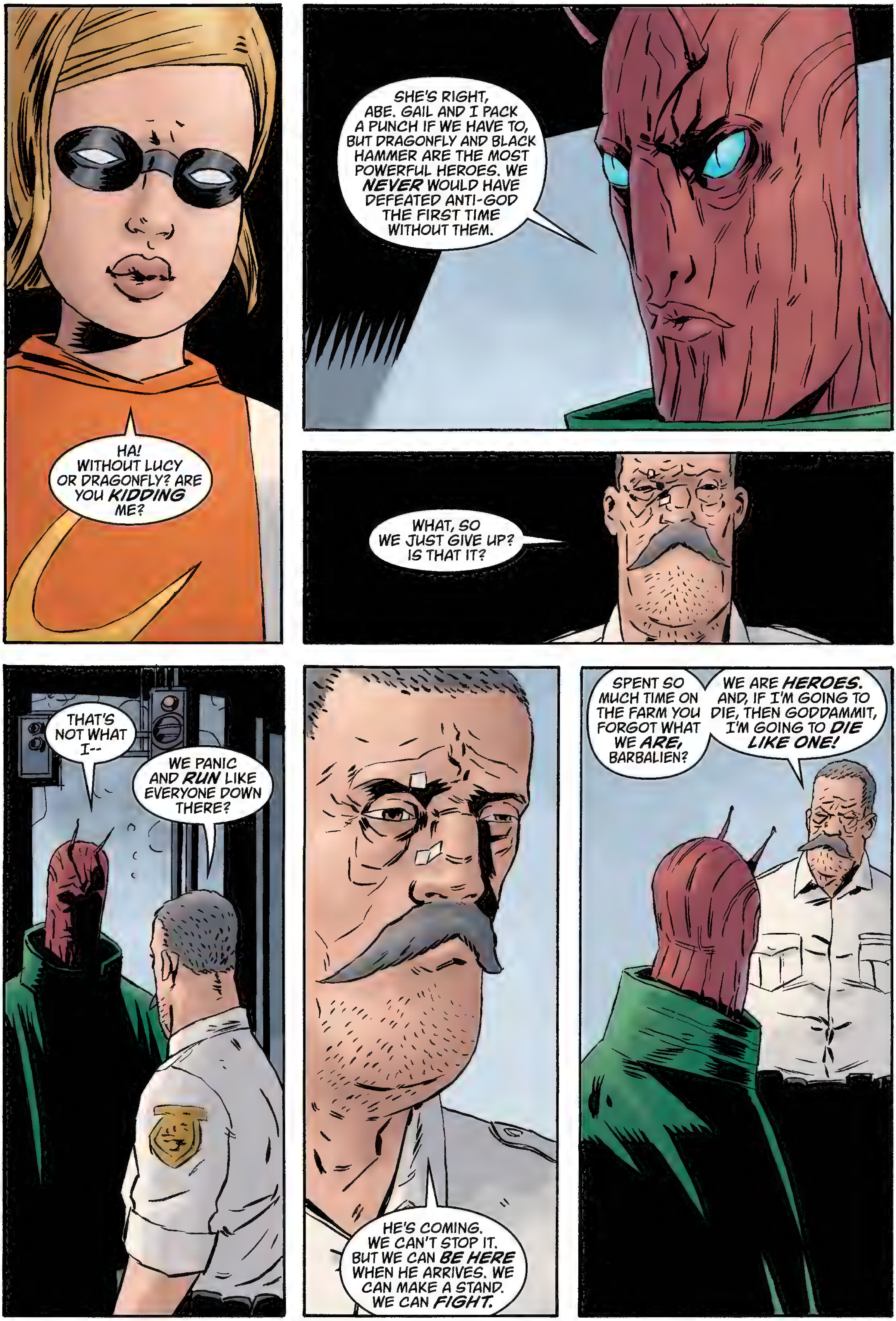

YOU ARE BLACK HAMMER NOW. BUT YOU ARE ALSO ***LUCY WEBER.*** YOUR DUAL NATURE WILL SAVE YOU.
YOU NEVER LEFT. YOU WERE ALWAYS PART OF THE BALANCE, LUCY. WHEN THIS IS OVER, BLACK HAMMER WILL BE NEEDED MORE THAN EVER.

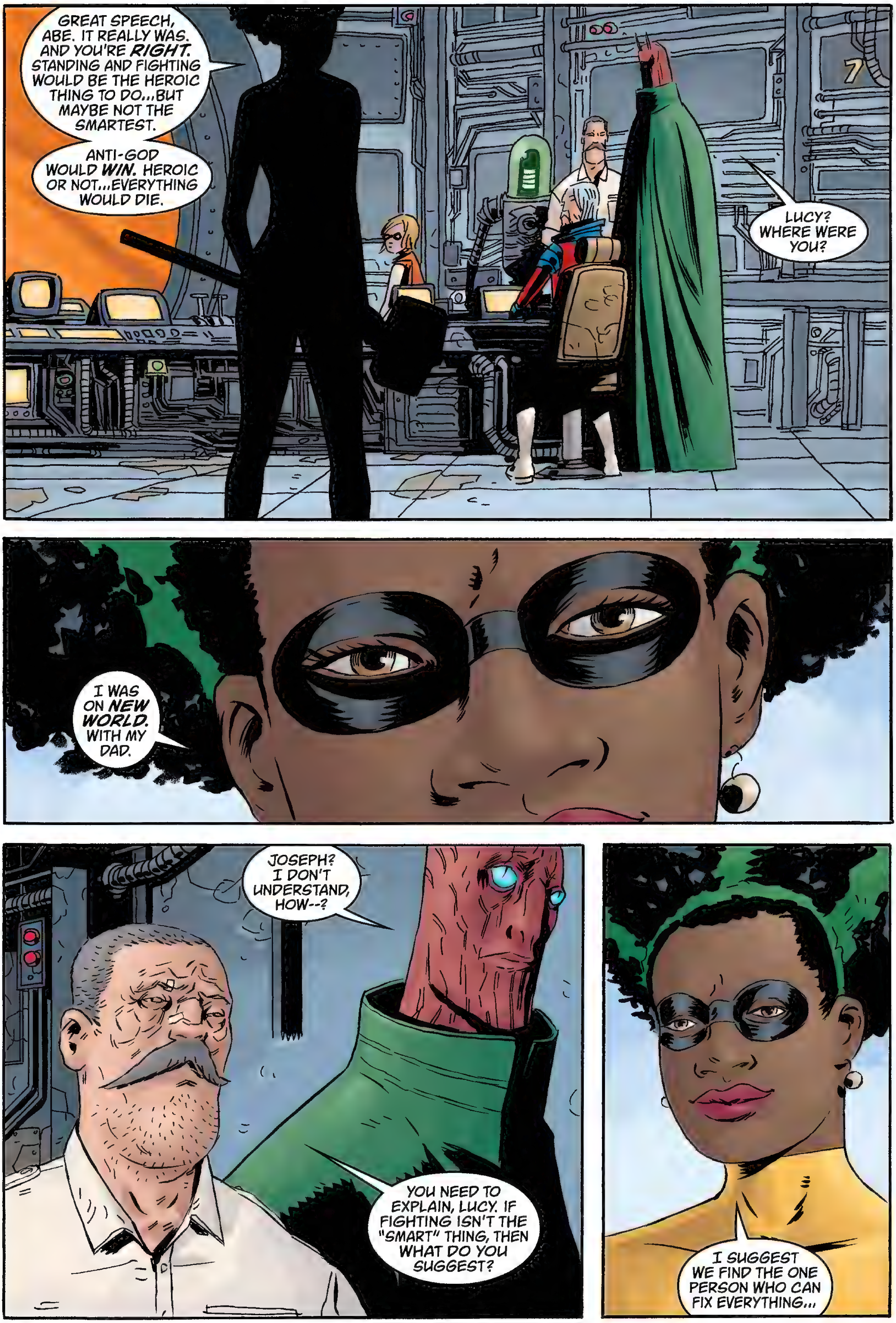

I KNOW THIS ISN'T AN EASY THING TO ASK, LUCY. I DON'T ENVY THE POSITION YOU'RE IN. BUT THEY HAVE TO GO. IT'S THEM OR ***EVERYONE ELSE*** IN THE UNIVERSE.
I KNOW, BUT I JUST DON'T THINK I CAN ***DO IT,*** DADDY. I DON'T THINK I CAN KILL THEM.

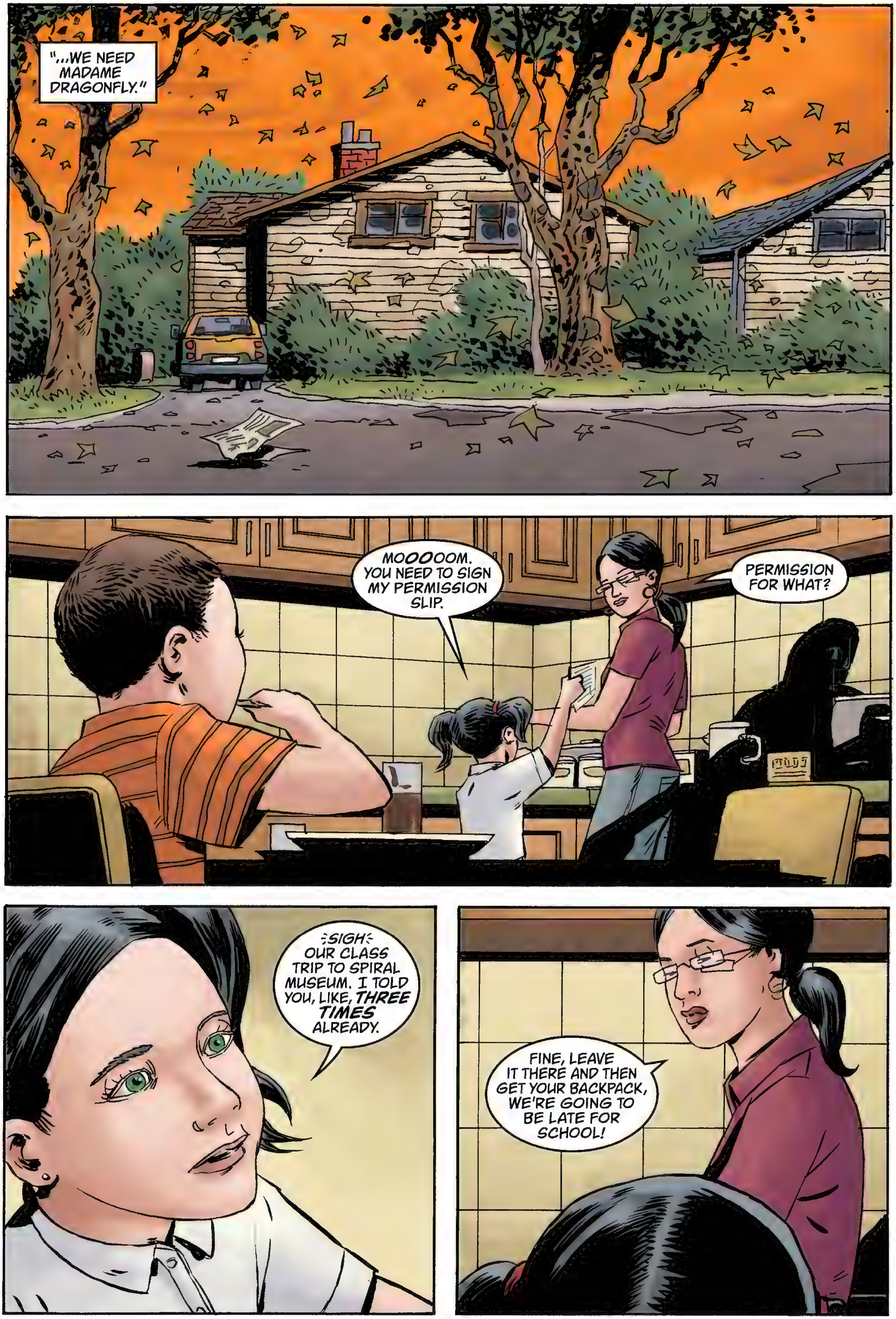

KILL THEM?
WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT KILLING?

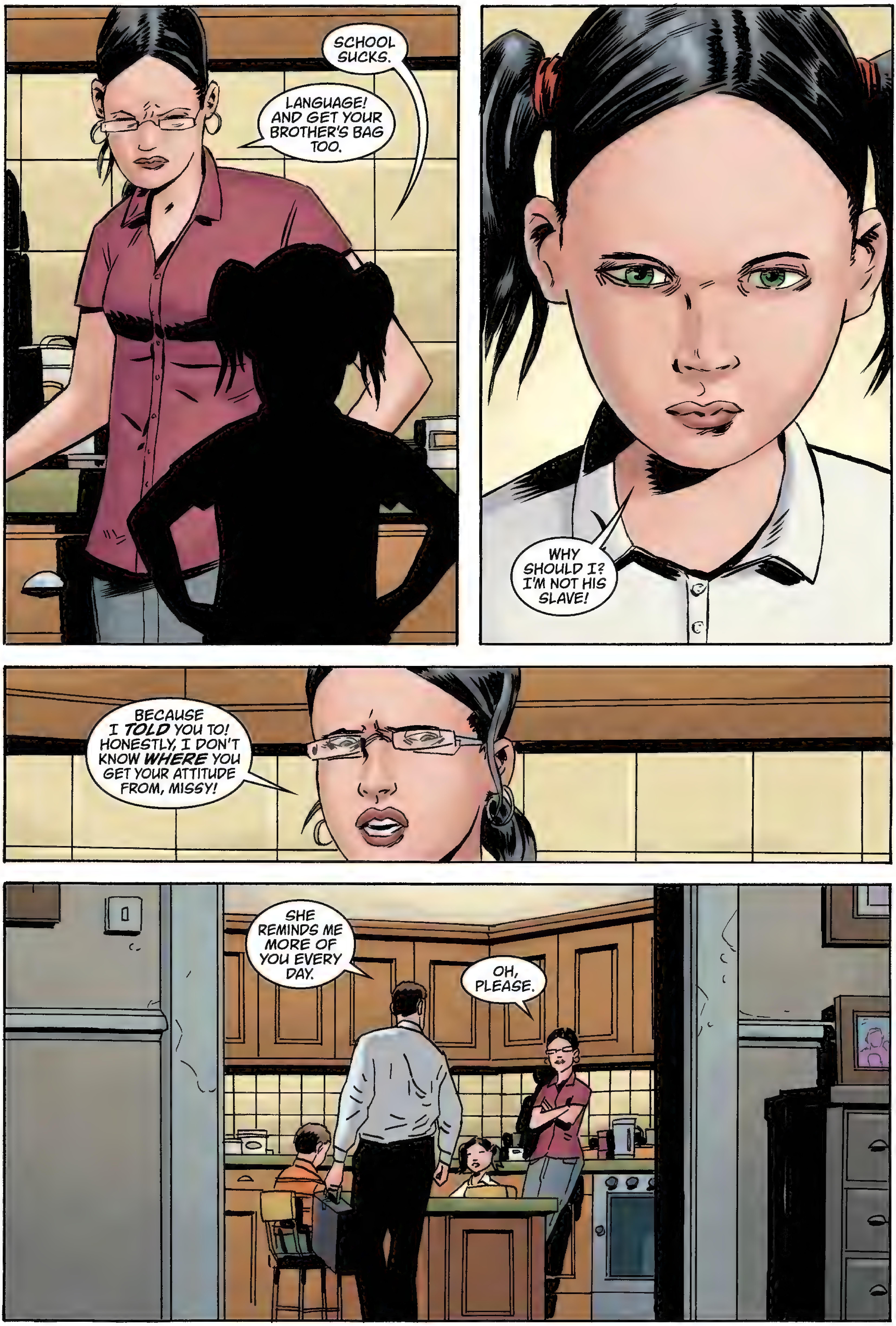
--SCIENTISTS ORIGINALLY THOUGHT WAS MERELY A BENIGN ASTRONOMICAL ANOMALY, HOWEVER THE LATEST THEORIES SUGGEST THAT IT MAY IN FACT BE A WORMHOLE OR BLACK HOLE OF SOME SORT.
SPC
--AT A STANDSTILL AS THOUSANDS ARE TRYING TO FLEE THE CITY. BUT THE QUESTION REMAINS, IS THERE ANYWHERE LEFT THAT IS SAFE?
NCO
CHAOS IN THE STREETS! POLICE ARE LOSING CONTROL--
--AND THE NATIONAL GUARD IS ON THE WAY--
SPC
--URGE THAT WE ALL REMAIN CALM. I KNOW THE ANOMALY IS ALARMING, BUT I ASSURE YOU THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS **EVERYTHING** UNDER CONTROL. THERE IS NO NEED FOR PANIC.
SEAL OF THE ... STATES
THIS IS THE END TIMES!
THAT IS ABSURD, AND FRANKLY THE SORT OF **FANATICISM** THAT IS CAUSING MAYHEM IN THE STREETS. THERE **IS** A SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION FOR THIS, MINISTER. WE JUST HAVEN'T FOUND IT YET.

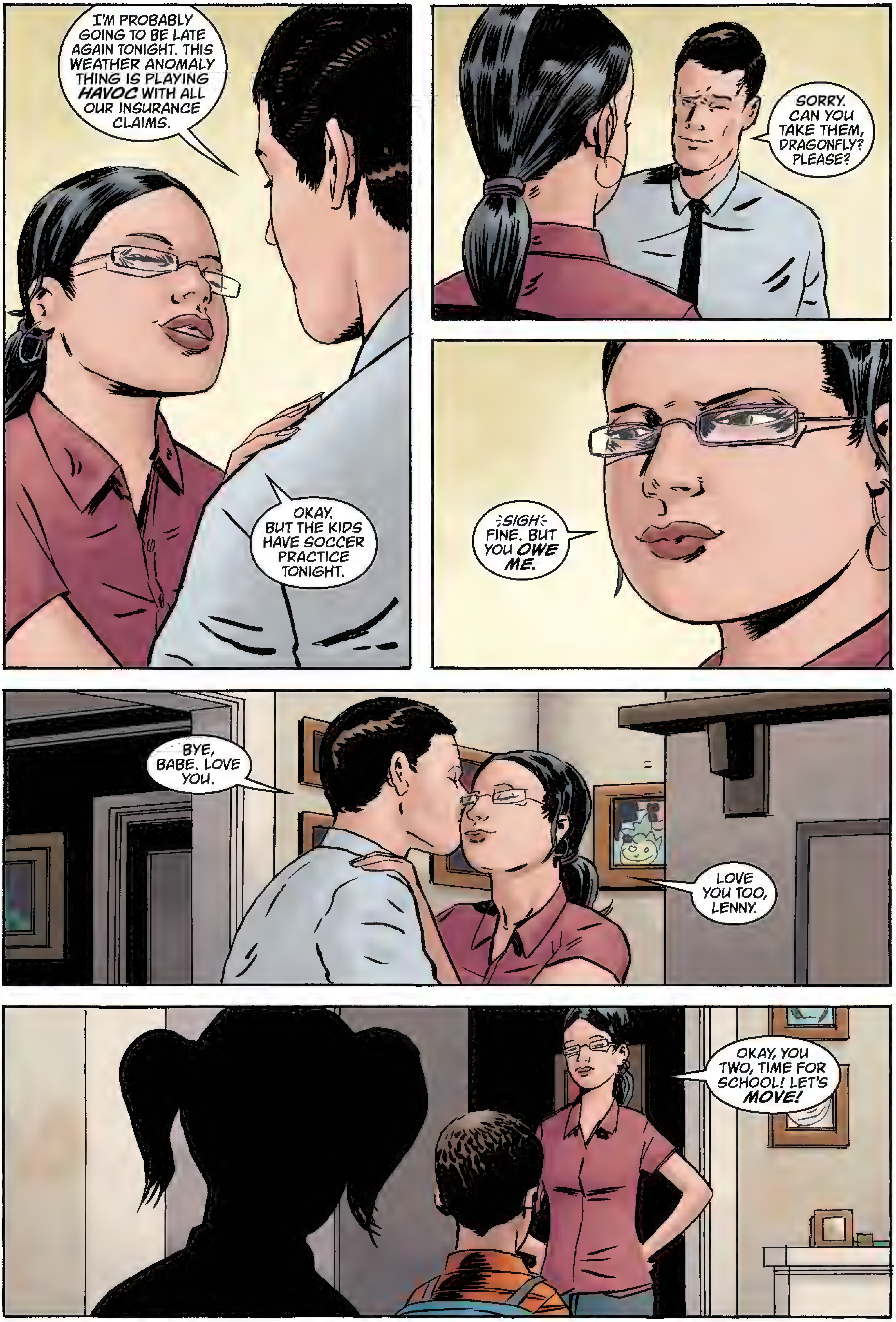

THE LORD IS RETURNING! JUST LOOK ABOVE AND YOU CAN LITERALLY SEE THE ***FACE OF GOD*** IN THE SKY!
HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, BUT THAT ***AIN'T*** GOD.
LAND THERE, COLONEL. THE GLOBAL PLANET BUILDING.
WHERE WE MADE OUR STAND ***LAST*** TIME, ABE?
"IT'S AS GOOD A SPOT AS ANY."
I HATE TO SOUND LIKE A BROKEN RECORD, BUT WHAT ***THE HELL*** ARE WE GOING TO DO?
WE DO WHAT WE ***HAVE*** TO, BARBIE.
AND WHAT EXACTLY DOES THAT ***MEAN,*** ABE?
WE MAKE A STAND.

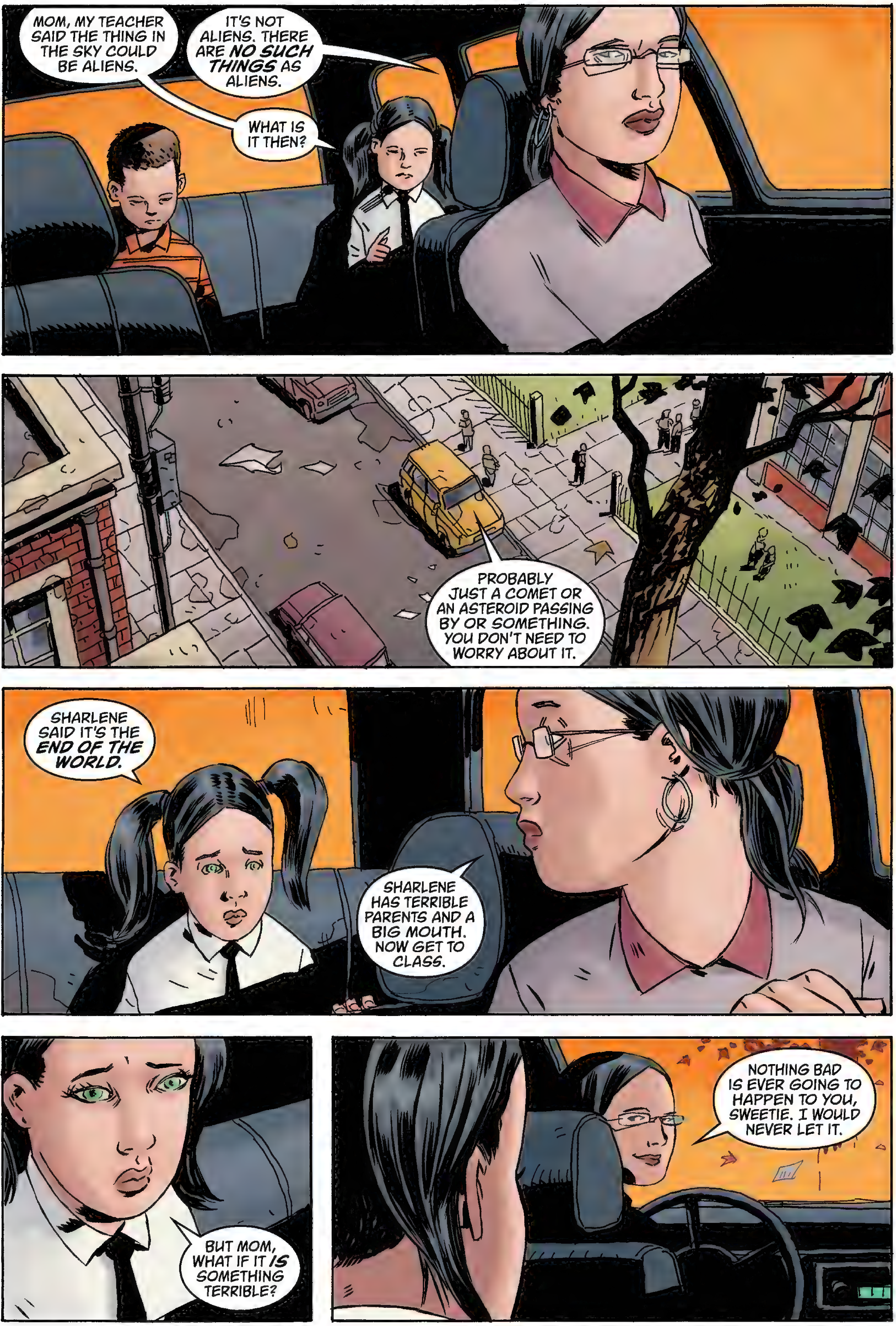

HA! WITHOUT LUCY OR DRAGONFLY? ARE YOU *KIDDING* ME?
SHE'S RIGHT, ABE. GAIL AND I PACK A PUNCH IF WE HAVE TO, BUT DRAGONFLY AND BLACK HAMMER ARE THE MOST POWERFUL HEROES. WE *NEVER* WOULD HAVE DEFEATED ANTI-GOD THE FIRST TIME WITHOUT THEM.
WHAT, SO WE JUST GIVE UP? IS THAT IT?
THAT'S NOT WHAT I--
WE PANIC AND *RUN* LIKE EVERYONE DOWN THERE?
HE'S COMING. WE CAN'T STOP IT. BUT WE CAN *BE HERE* WHEN HE ARRIVES. WE CAN MAKE A STAND. WE CAN *FIGHT.*
SPENT SO MUCH TIME ON THE FARM YOU FORGOT WHAT WE *ARE,* BARBALIEN?
WE ARE *HEROES.* AND, IF I'M GOING TO DIE, THEN GODDAMMIT, I'M GOING TO *DIE LIKE ONE!*

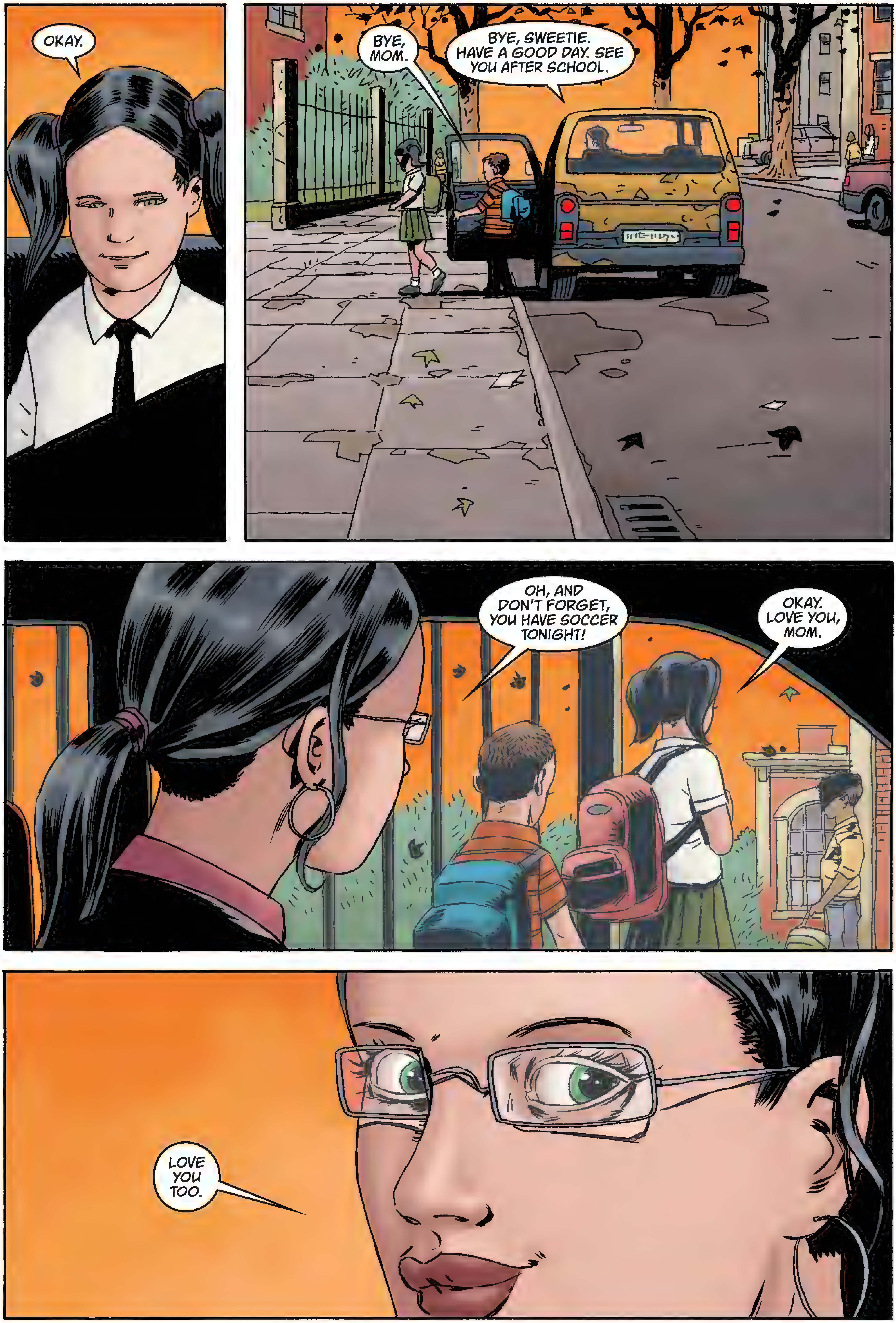

GREAT SPEECH, ABE. IT REALLY WAS. AND YOU'RE *RIGHT*. STANDING AND FIGHTING WOULD BE THE HEROIC THING TO DO...BUT MAYBE NOT THE SMARTEST.
ANTI-GOD WOULD *WIN*. HEROIC OR NOT...EVERYTHING WOULD DIE.
7
LUCY? WHERE WERE YOU?
I WAS ON *NEW WORLD*. WITH MY DAD.
JOSEPH? I DON'T UNDERSTAND, HOW--?
YOU NEED TO EXPLAIN, LUCY. IF FIGHTING ISN'T THE "SMART" THING, THEN WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?
I SUGGEST WE FIND THE ONE PERSON WHO CAN FIX EVERYTHING...

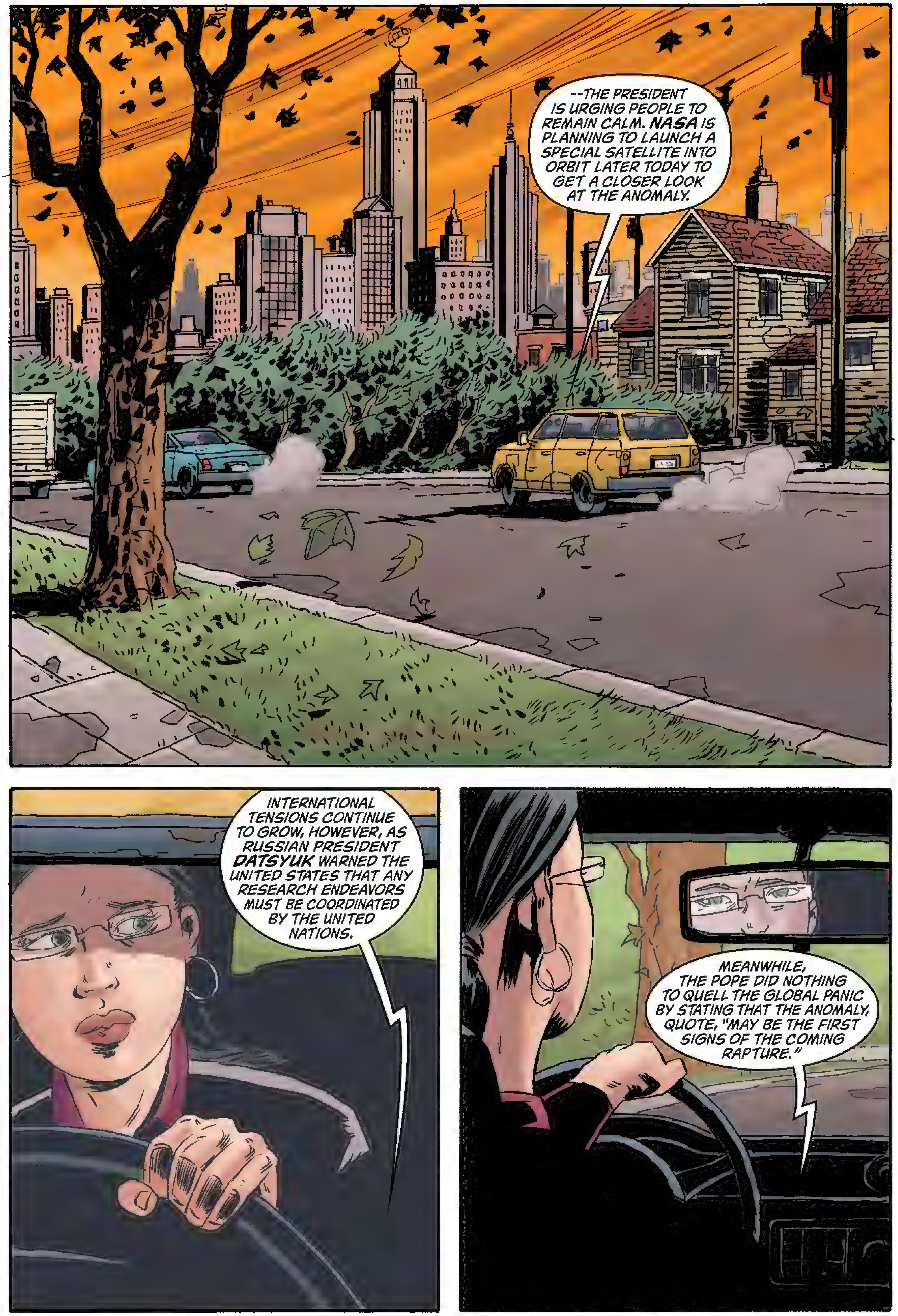

"...WE NEED MADAME DRAGONFLY."
MOOOOOM. YOU NEED TO SIGN MY PERMISSION SLIP.
PERMISSION FOR WHAT?
SIGH OUR CLASS TRIP TO SPIRAL MUSEUM. I TOLD YOU, LIKE, ***THREE TIMES*** ALREADY.
FINE, LEAVE IT THERE AND THEN GET YOUR BACKPACK, WE'RE GOING TO BE LATE FOR SCHOOL!


SCHOOL SUCKS.
LANGUAGE! AND GET YOUR BROTHER'S BAG TOO.
WHY SHOULD I? I'M NOT HIS SLAVE!
BECAUSE I ***TOLD*** YOU TO! HONESTLY, I DON'T KNOW ***WHERE*** YOU GET YOUR ATTITUDE FROM, MISSY!
SHE REMINDS ME MORE OF YOU EVERY DAY.
OH, PLEASE.

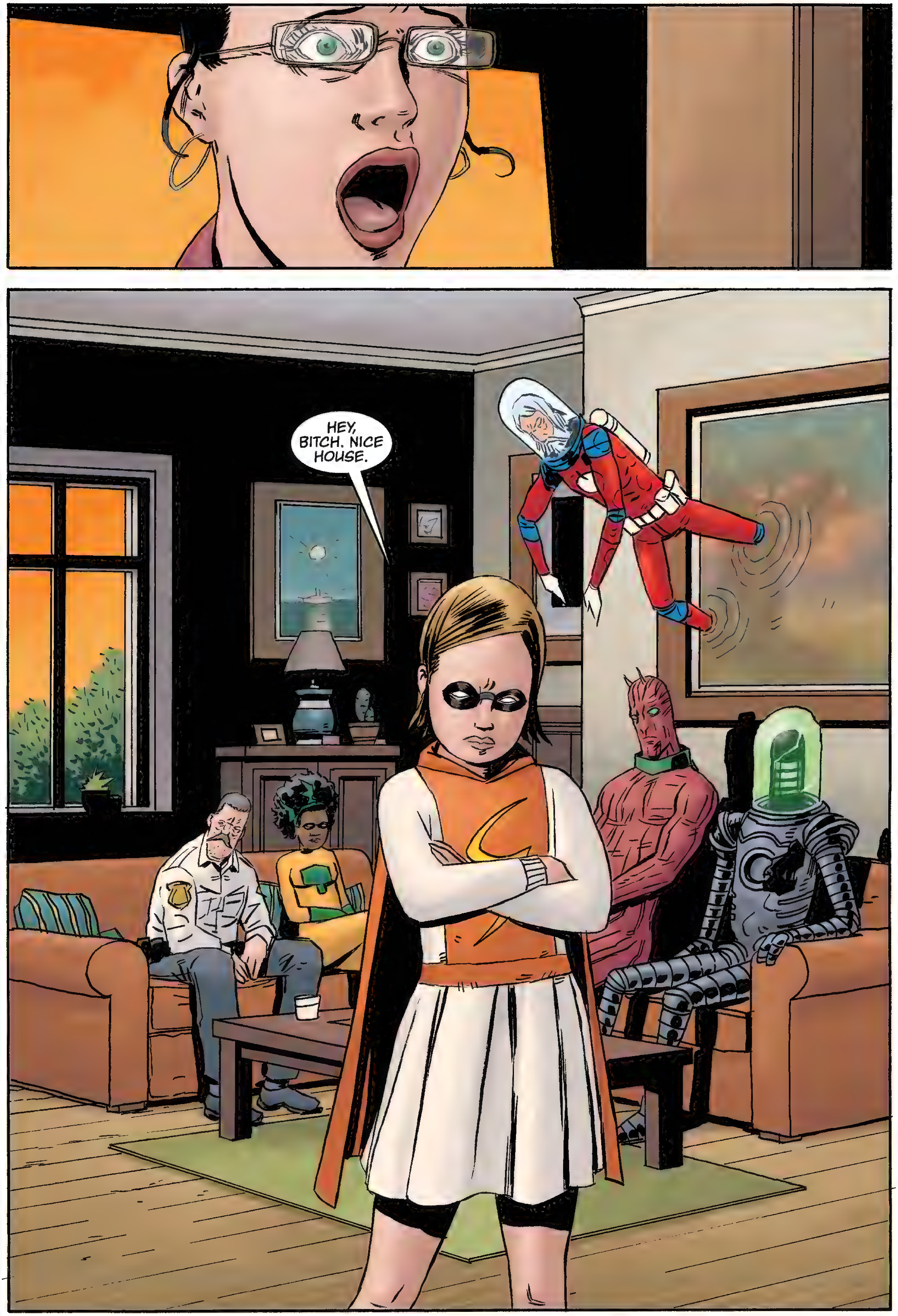

I'M PROBABLY GOING TO BE LATE AGAIN TONIGHT. THIS WEATHER ANOMALY THING IS PLAYING HAVOC WITH ALL OUR INSURANCE CLAIMS.
OKAY. BUT THE KIDS HAVE SOCCER PRACTICE TONIGHT.
SORRY. CAN YOU TAKE THEM, DRAGONFLY? PLEASE?
SIGH FINE. BUT YOU OWE ME.
BYE, BABE. LOVE YOU.
LOVE YOU TOO, LENNY.
OKAY, YOU TWO, TIME FOR SCHOOL! LET'S MOVE!

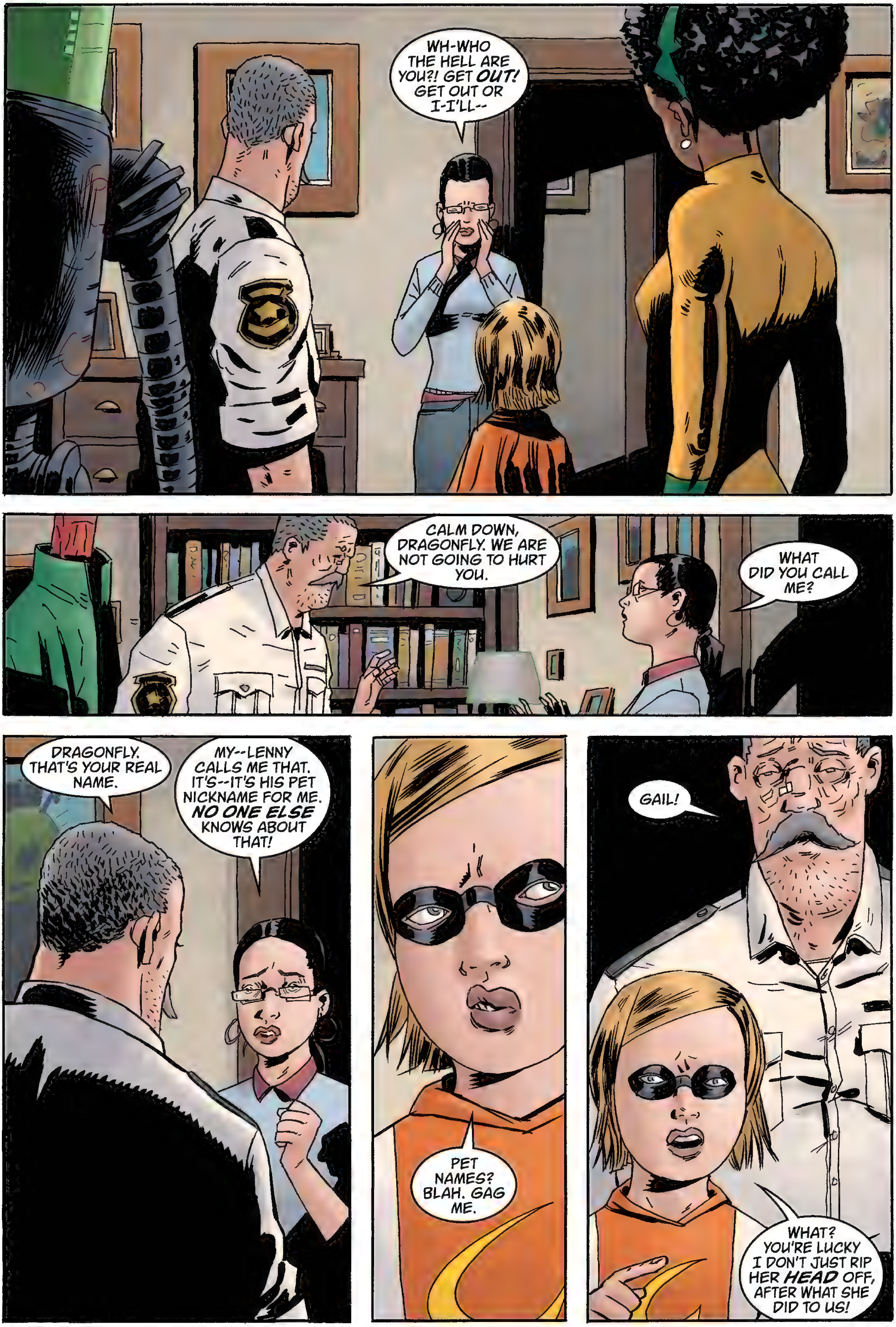

MOM, MY TEACHER SAID THE THING IN THE SKY COULD BE ALIENS.
IT'S NOT ALIENS. THERE ARE *NO SUCH THINGS* AS ALIENS.
WHAT IS IT THEN?
PROBABLY JUST A COMET OR AN ASTEROID PASSING BY OR SOMETHING. YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT IT.
SHARLENE SAID IT'S THE *END OF THE WORLD.*
SHARLENE HAS TERRIBLE PARENTS AND A BIG MOUTH. NOW GET TO CLASS.
BUT MOM, WHAT IF IT *IS* SOMETHING TERRIBLE?
NOTHING BAD IS EVER GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU, SWEETIE. I WOULD NEVER LET IT.

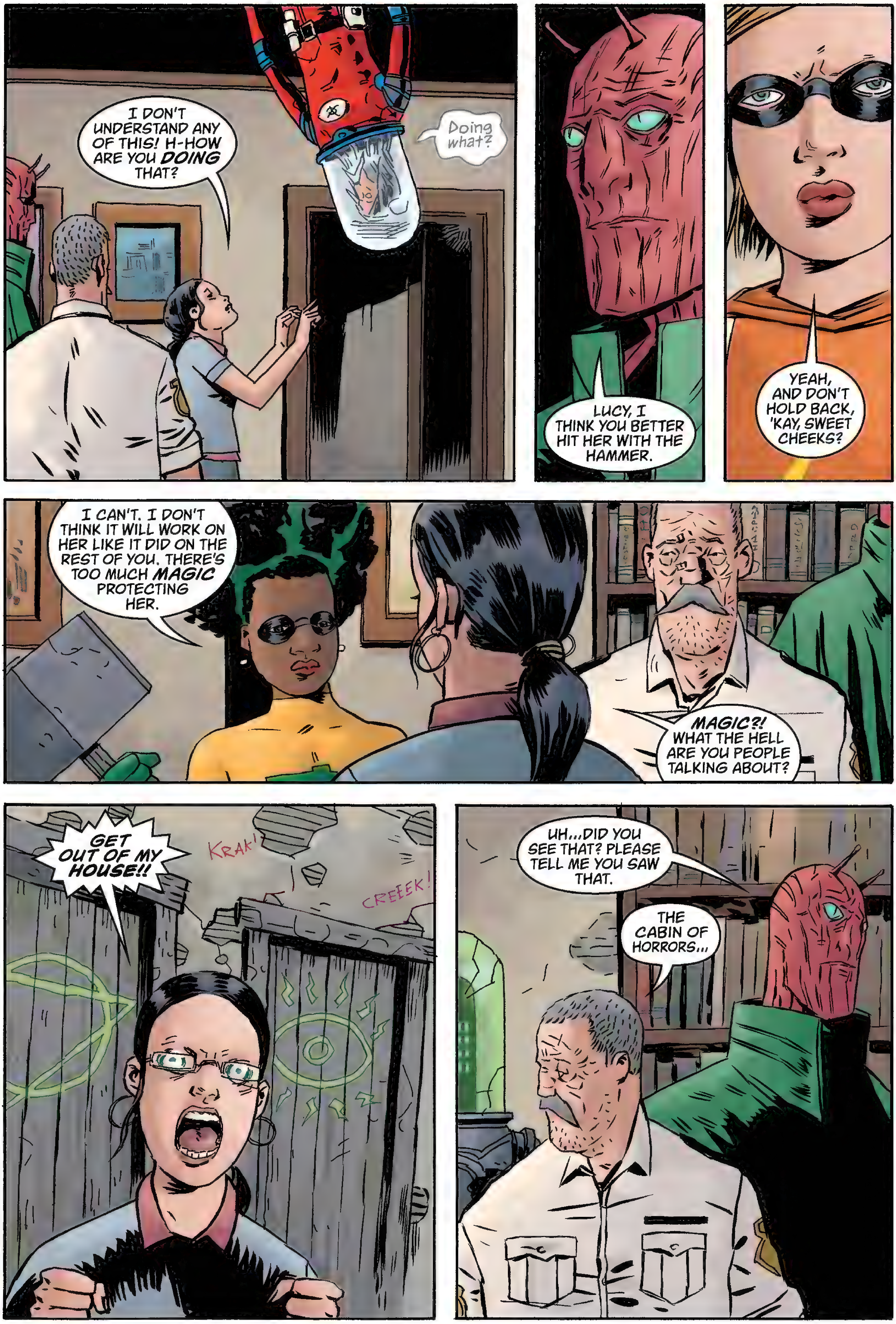

OKAY.
BYE, MOM.
BYE, SWEETIE. HAVE A GOOD DAY. SEE YOU AFTER SCHOOL.
OH, AND DON'T FORGET, YOU HAVE SOCCER TONIGHT!
OKAY. LOVE YOU, MOM.
LOVE YOU TOO.

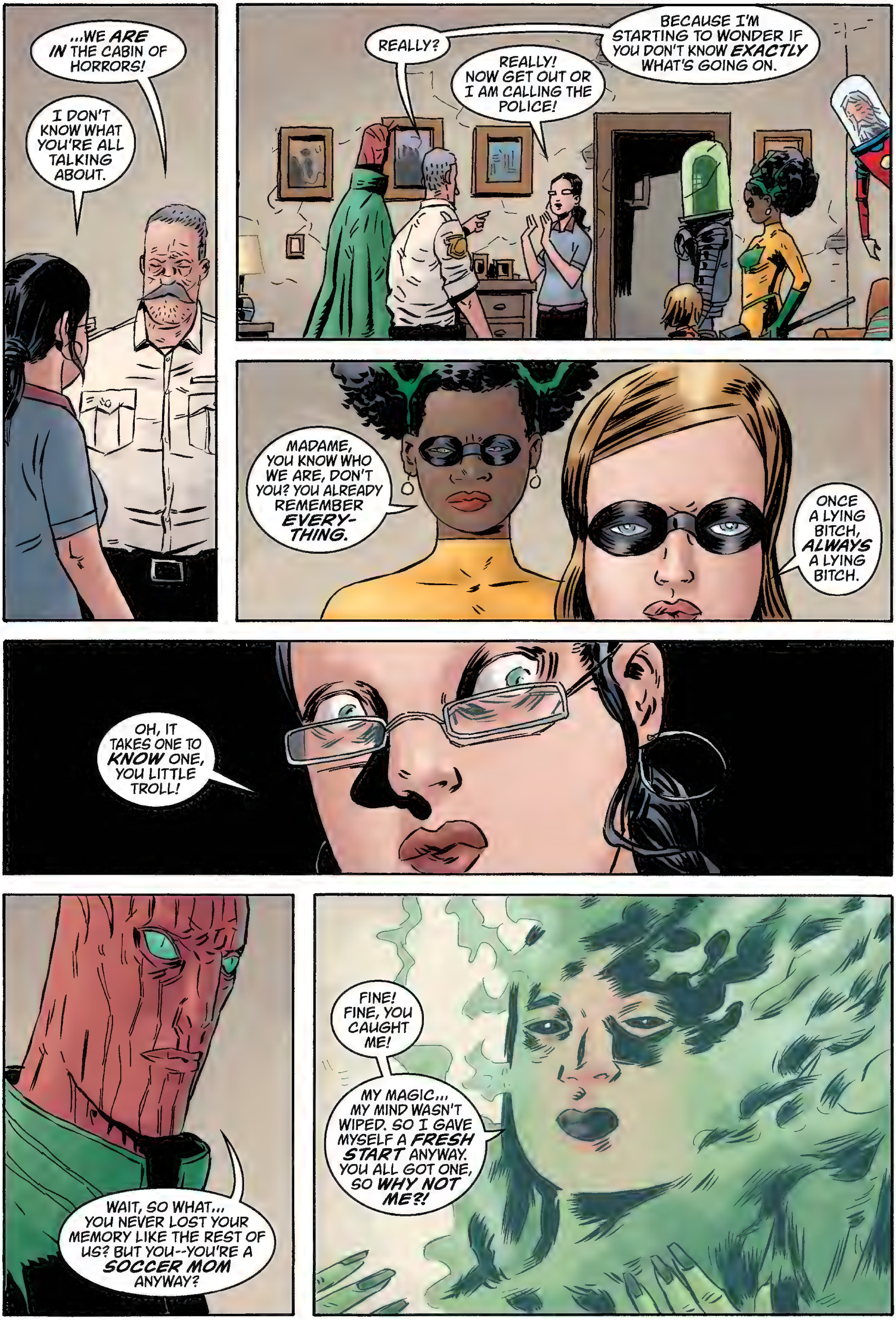

--THE PRESIDENT IS URGING PEOPLE TO REMAIN CALM. **NASA** IS PLANNING TO LAUNCH A SPECIAL SATELLITE INTO ORBIT LATER TODAY TO GET A CLOSER LOOK AT THE ANOMALY.
INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS CONTINUE TO GROW, HOWEVER, AS RUSSIAN PRESIDENT **DATSYUK** WARNED THE UNITED STATES THAT ANY RESEARCH ENDEAVORS MUST BE COORDINATED BY THE UNITED NATIONS.
MEANWHILE, THE POPE DID NOTHING TO QUELL THE GLOBAL PANIC BY STATING THAT THE ANOMALY, QUOTE, "MAY BE THE FIRST SIGNS OF THE COMING RAPTURE."

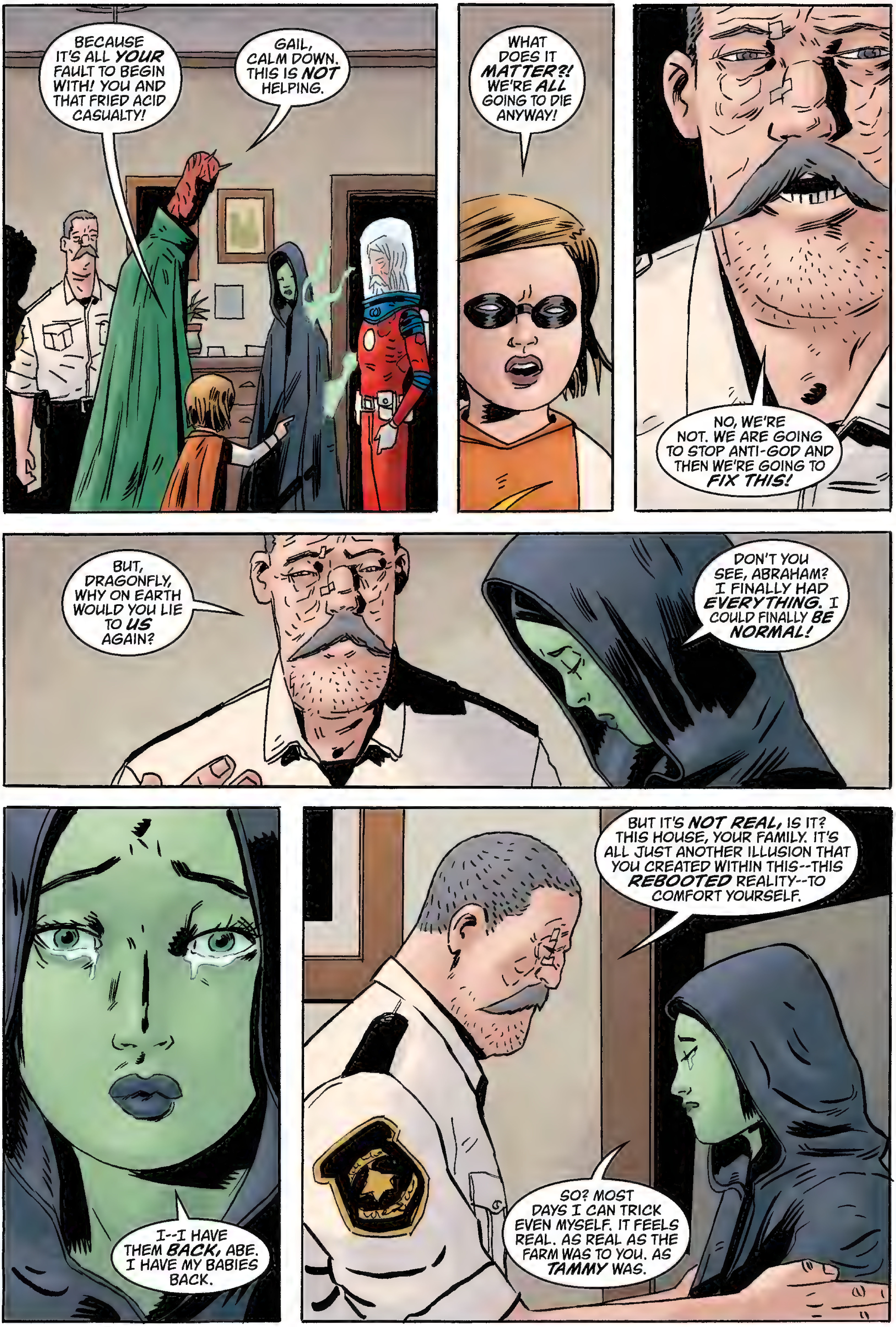
CLICK
TSK!

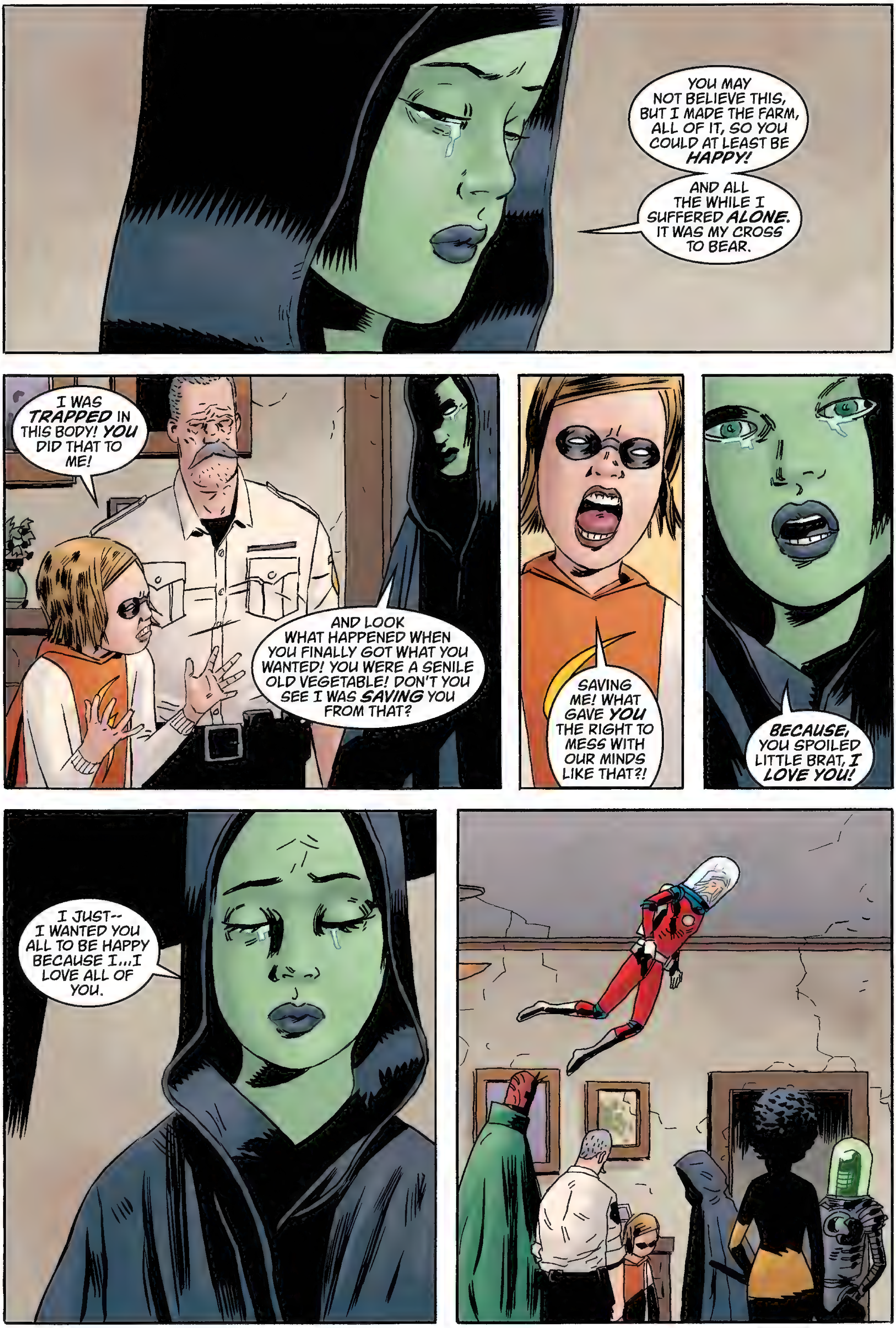

HEY, BITCH. NICE HOUSE.

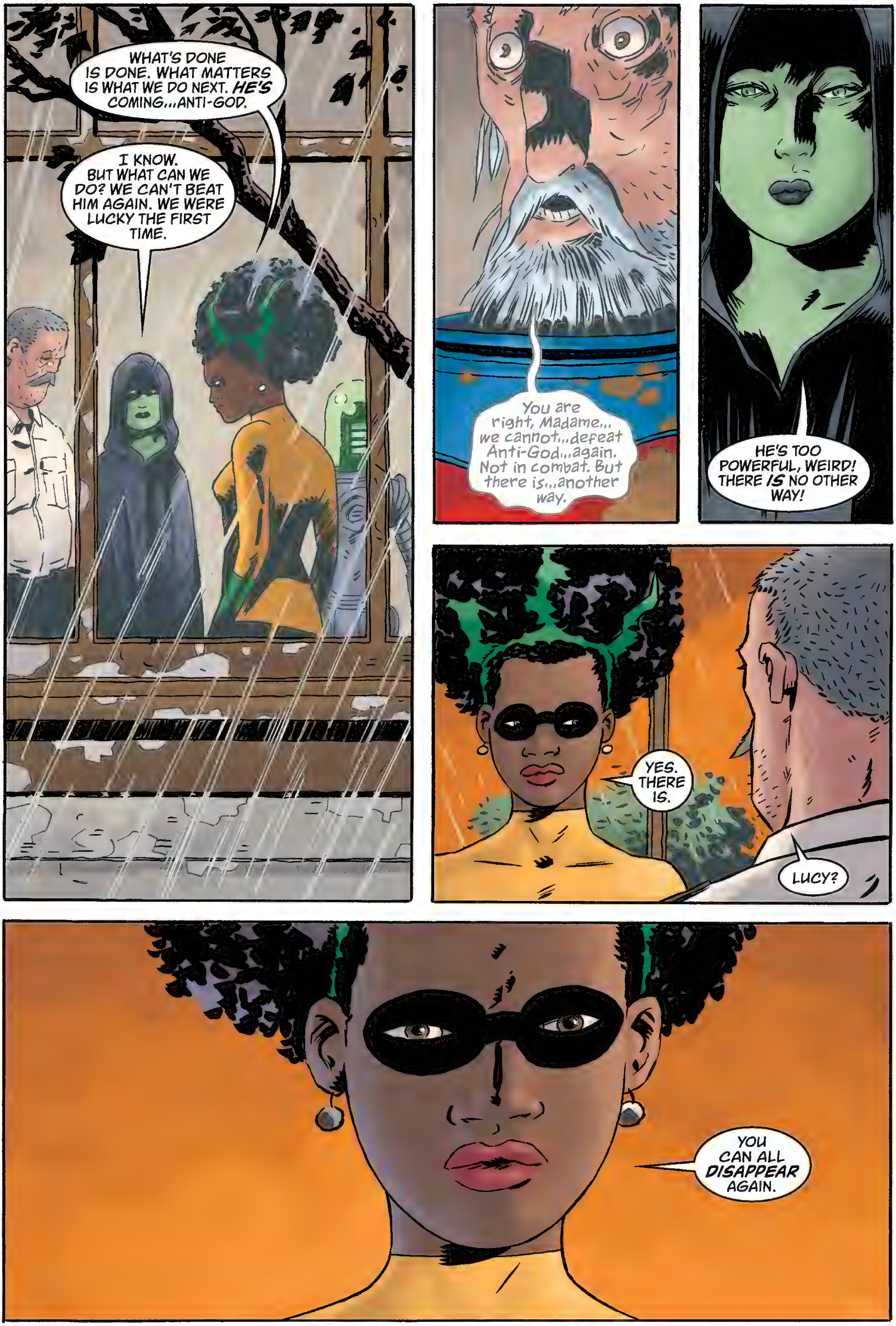

WH-WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?! GET OUT! GET OUT OR I-I'LL--
CALM DOWN, DRAGONFLY. WE ARE NOT GOING TO HURT YOU.
WHAT DID YOU CALL ME?
DRAGONFLY. THAT'S YOUR REAL NAME.
MY--LENNY CALLS ME THAT. IT'S--IT'S HIS PET NICKNAME FOR ME. NO ONE ELSE KNOWS ABOUT THAT!
PET NAMES? BLAH. GAG ME.
GAIL!
WHAT? YOU'RE LUCKY I DON'T JUST RIP HER HEAD OFF, AFTER WHAT SHE DID TO US!

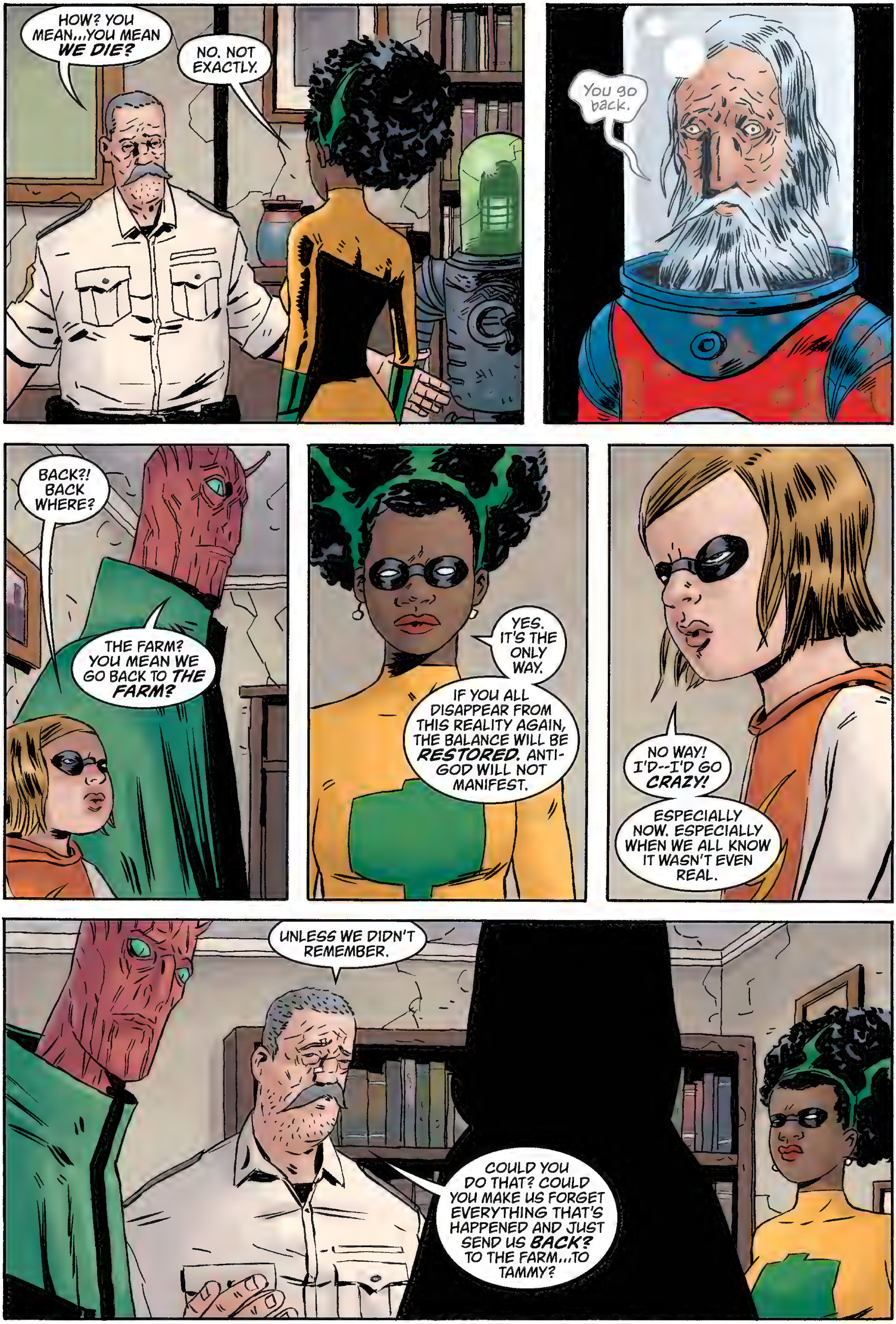

I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS! H-HOW ARE YOU *DOING* THAT?
Doing what?
LUCY, I THINK YOU BETTER HIT HER WITH THE HAMMER.
YEAH, AND DON'T HOLD BACK, 'KAY, SWEET CHEEKS?
I CAN'T. I DON'T THINK IT WILL WORK ON HER LIKE IT DID ON THE REST OF YOU. THERE'S TOO MUCH *MAGIC* PROTECTING HER.
MAGIC?! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT?
GET OUT OF MY HOUSE!!
KRAK!
CREEEK!
UH...DID YOU SEE THAT? PLEASE TELL ME YOU SAW THAT.
THE CABIN OF HORRORS...

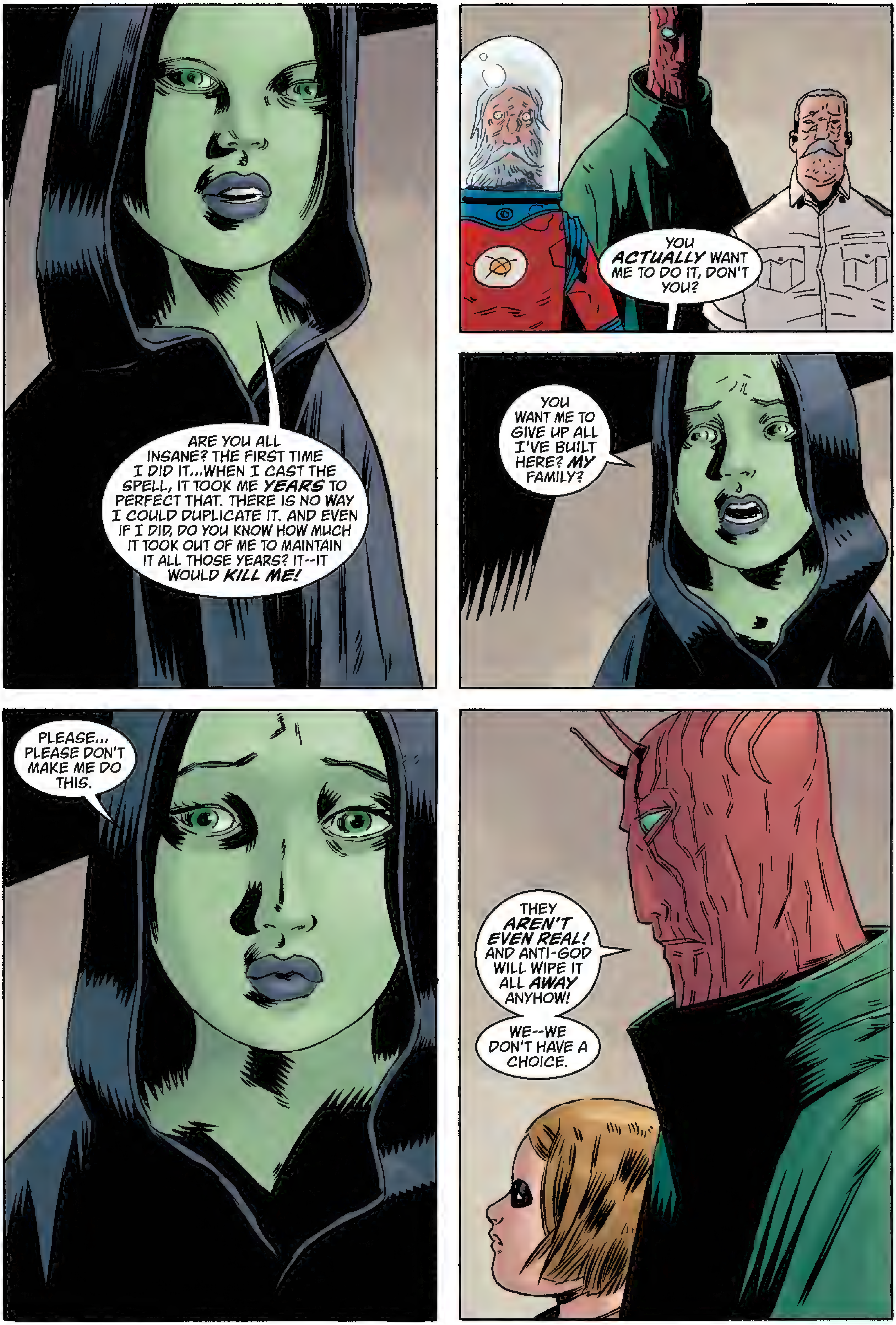

...WE ARE IN THE CABIN OF HORRORS!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ALL TALKING ABOUT.
REALLY?
BECAUSE I'M STARTING TO WONDER IF YOU DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT'S GOING ON.
REALLY! NOW GET OUT OR I AM CALLING THE POLICE!
MADAME, YOU KNOW WHO WE ARE, DON'T YOU? YOU ALREADY REMEMBER EVERYTHING.
ONCE A LYING BITCH, ALWAYS A LYING BITCH.
OH, IT TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE, YOU LITTLE TROLL!
WAIT, SO WHAT... YOU NEVER LOST YOUR MEMORY LIKE THE REST OF US? BUT YOU--YOU'RE A SOCCER MOM ANYWAY?
FINE! FINE, YOU CAUGHT ME!
MY MAGIC... MY MIND WASN'T WIPED. SO I GAVE MYSELF A FRESH START ANYWAY. YOU ALL GOT ONE, SO WHY NOT ME?!

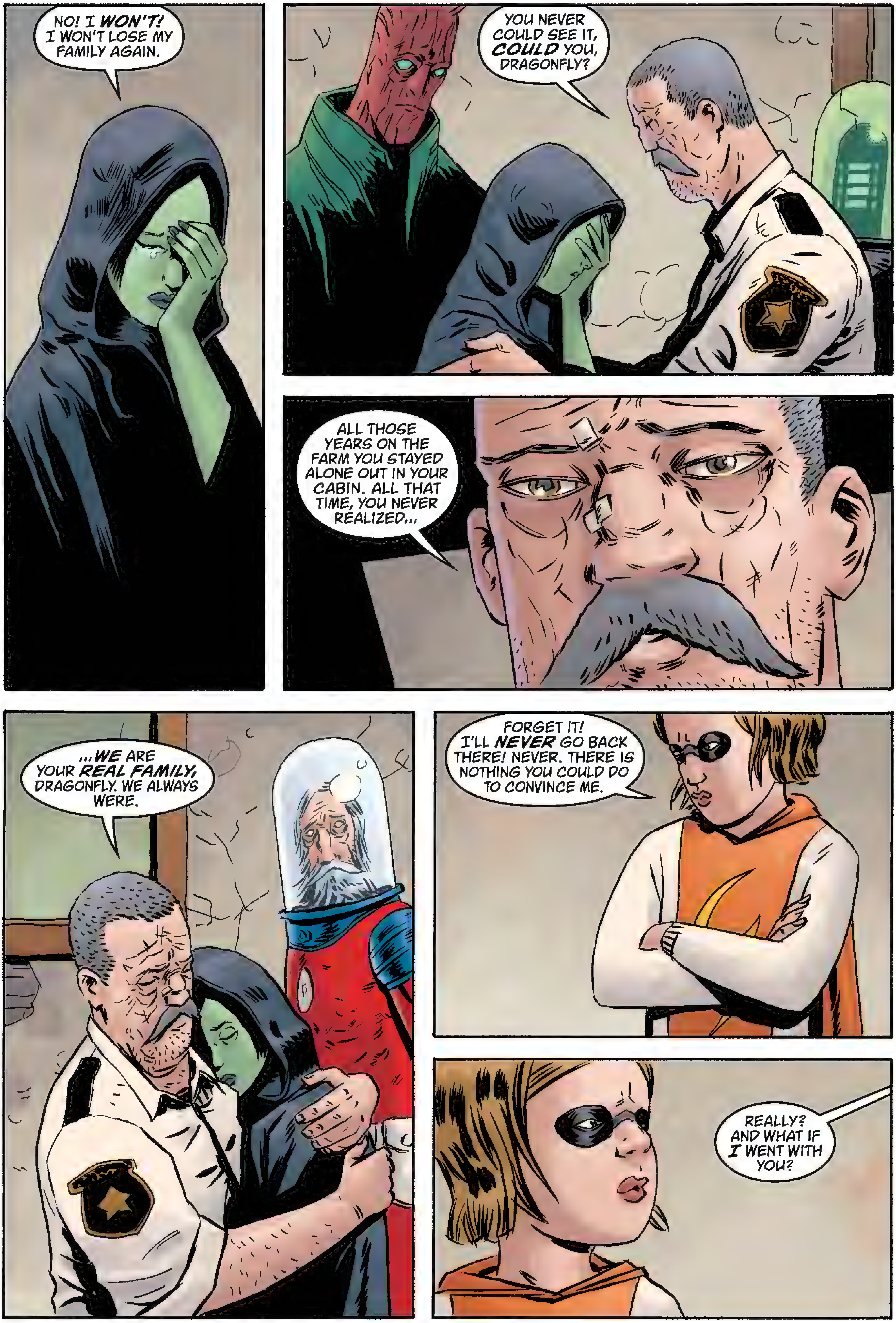

BECAUSE IT'S ALL ***YOUR*** FAULT TO BEGIN WITH! YOU AND THAT FRIED ACID CASUALTY!
GAIL, CALM DOWN. THIS IS ***NOT*** HELPING.
WHAT DOES IT ***MATTER?!*** WE'RE ***ALL*** GOING TO DIE ANYWAY!
NO, WE'RE NOT. WE ARE GOING TO STOP ANTI-GOD AND THEN WE'RE GOING TO ***FIX THIS!***
BUT, DRAGONFLY, WHY ON EARTH WOULD YOU LIE TO ***US*** AGAIN?
DON'T YOU SEE, ABRAHAM? I FINALLY HAD ***EVERYTHING.*** I COULD FINALLY ***BE NORMAL!***
I--I HAVE THEM ***BACK,*** ABE. I HAVE MY BABIES BACK.
BUT IT'S ***NOT REAL,*** IS IT? THIS HOUSE, YOUR FAMILY. IT'S ALL JUST ANOTHER ILLUSION THAT YOU CREATED WITHIN THIS--THIS ***REBOOTED*** REALITY--TO COMFORT YOURSELF.
SO? MOST DAYS I CAN TRICK EVEN MYSELF. IT FEELS REAL. AS REAL AS THE FARM WAS TO YOU. AS ***TAMMY*** WAS.


YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THIS, BUT I MADE THE FARM, ALL OF IT, SO YOU COULD AT LEAST BE *HAPPY!*
AND ALL THE WHILE I SUFFERED *ALONE.* IT WAS MY CROSS TO BEAR.
I WAS *TRAPPED* IN THIS BODY! *YOU* DID THAT TO ME!
AND LOOK WHAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU FINALLY GOT WHAT YOU WANTED! YOU WERE A SENILE OLD VEGETABLE! DON'T YOU SEE I WAS *SAVING* YOU FROM THAT?
SAVING ME! WHAT GAVE *YOU* THE RIGHT TO MESS WITH OUR MINDS LIKE THAT?!
BECAUSE, YOU SPOILED LITTLE BRAT, *I LOVE YOU!*
I JUST-- I WANTED YOU ALL TO BE HAPPY BECAUSE I...I LOVE ALL OF YOU.


WHAT'S DONE IS DONE. WHAT MATTERS IS WHAT WE DO NEXT. *HE'S* COMING...ANTI-GOD.
I KNOW. BUT WHAT CAN WE DO? WE CAN'T BEAT HIM AGAIN. WE WERE LUCKY THE FIRST TIME.
You are right, Madame... we cannot...defeat Anti-God...again. Not in combat. But there is...another way.
HE'S TOO POWERFUL, WEIRD! THERE *IS* NO OTHER WAY!
YES. THERE IS.
LUCY?
YOU CAN ALL *DISAPPEAR* AGAIN.

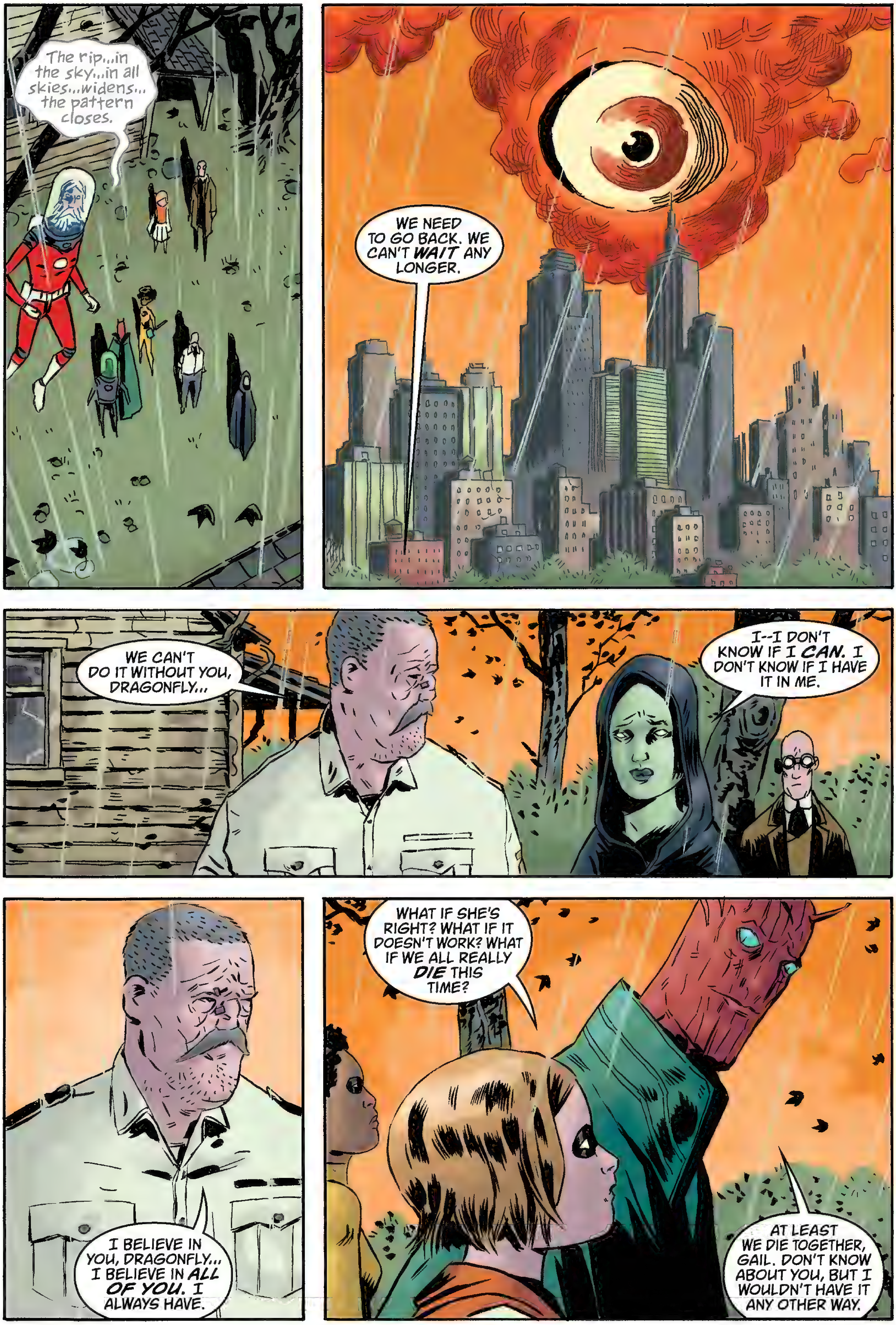

HOW? YOU MEAN...YOU MEAN **WE DIE?**
NO. NOT EXACTLY.
You go back.
BACK?! BACK WHERE?
THE FARM? YOU MEAN WE GO BACK TO **THE FARM?**
YES. IT'S THE ONLY WAY.
IF YOU ALL DISAPPEAR FROM THIS REALITY AGAIN, THE BALANCE WILL BE **RESTORED.** ANTI-GOD WILL NOT MANIFEST.
NO WAY! I'D--I'D GO **CRAZY!**
ESPECIALLY NOW. ESPECIALLY WHEN WE ALL KNOW IT WASN'T EVEN REAL.
UNLESS WE DIDN'T REMEMBER.
COULD YOU DO THAT? COULD YOU MAKE US FORGET EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED AND JUST SEND US **BACK?** TO THE FARM...TO TAMMY?

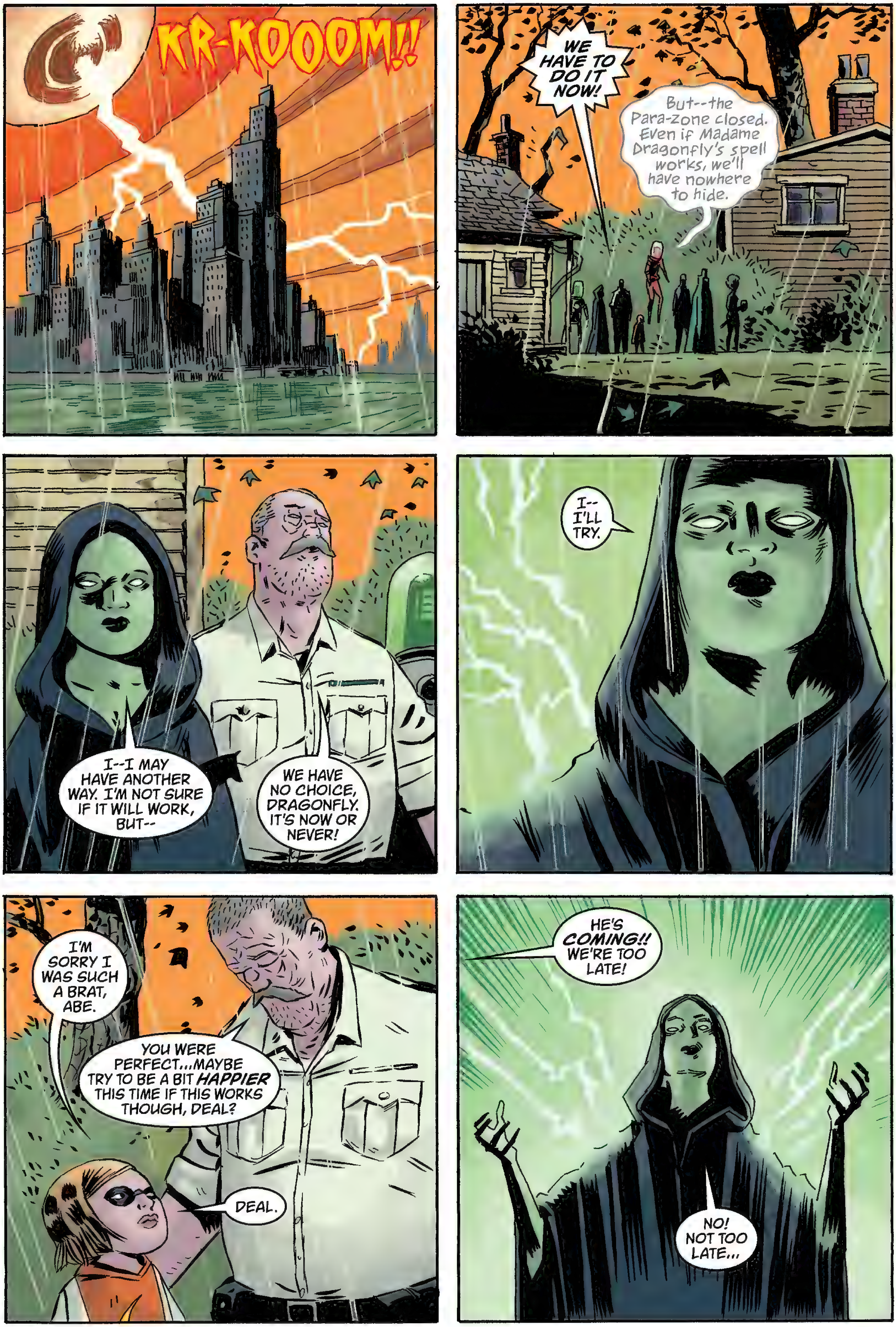

ARE YOU ALL INSANE? THE FIRST TIME I DID IT...WHEN I CAST THE SPELL, IT TOOK ME *YEARS* TO PERFECT THAT. THERE IS NO WAY I COULD DUPLICATE IT. AND EVEN IF I DID, DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH IT TOOK OUT OF ME TO MAINTAIN IT ALL THOSE YEARS? IT--IT WOULD *KILL ME!*
YOU *ACTUALLY* WANT ME TO DO IT, DON'T YOU?
YOU WANT ME TO GIVE UP ALL I'VE BUILT HERE? *MY* FAMILY?
PLEASE... PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME DO THIS.
THEY *AREN'T EVEN REAL!* AND ANTI-GOD WILL WIPE IT ALL *AWAY* ANYHOW!
WE--WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE.


NO! I *WON'T!* I WON'T LOSE MY FAMILY AGAIN.
YOU NEVER COULD SEE IT, *COULD* YOU, DRAGONFLY?
ALL THOSE YEARS ON THE FARM YOU STAYED ALONE OUT IN YOUR CABIN. ALL THAT TIME, YOU NEVER REALIZED...
...*WE* ARE YOUR *REAL FAMILY,* DRAGONFLY. WE ALWAYS WERE.
FORGET IT! I'LL *NEVER* GO BACK THERE! NEVER. THERE IS NOTHING YOU COULD DO TO CONVINCE ME.
REALLY? AND WHAT IF *I* WENT WITH YOU?

SHERLOCK?!
YOU'RE HERE? IN *THIS* WORLD? I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE YOU AGAIN!
NOR I YOU, MY LOVE...I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU. I ***NEVER STOPPED*** LOOKING.

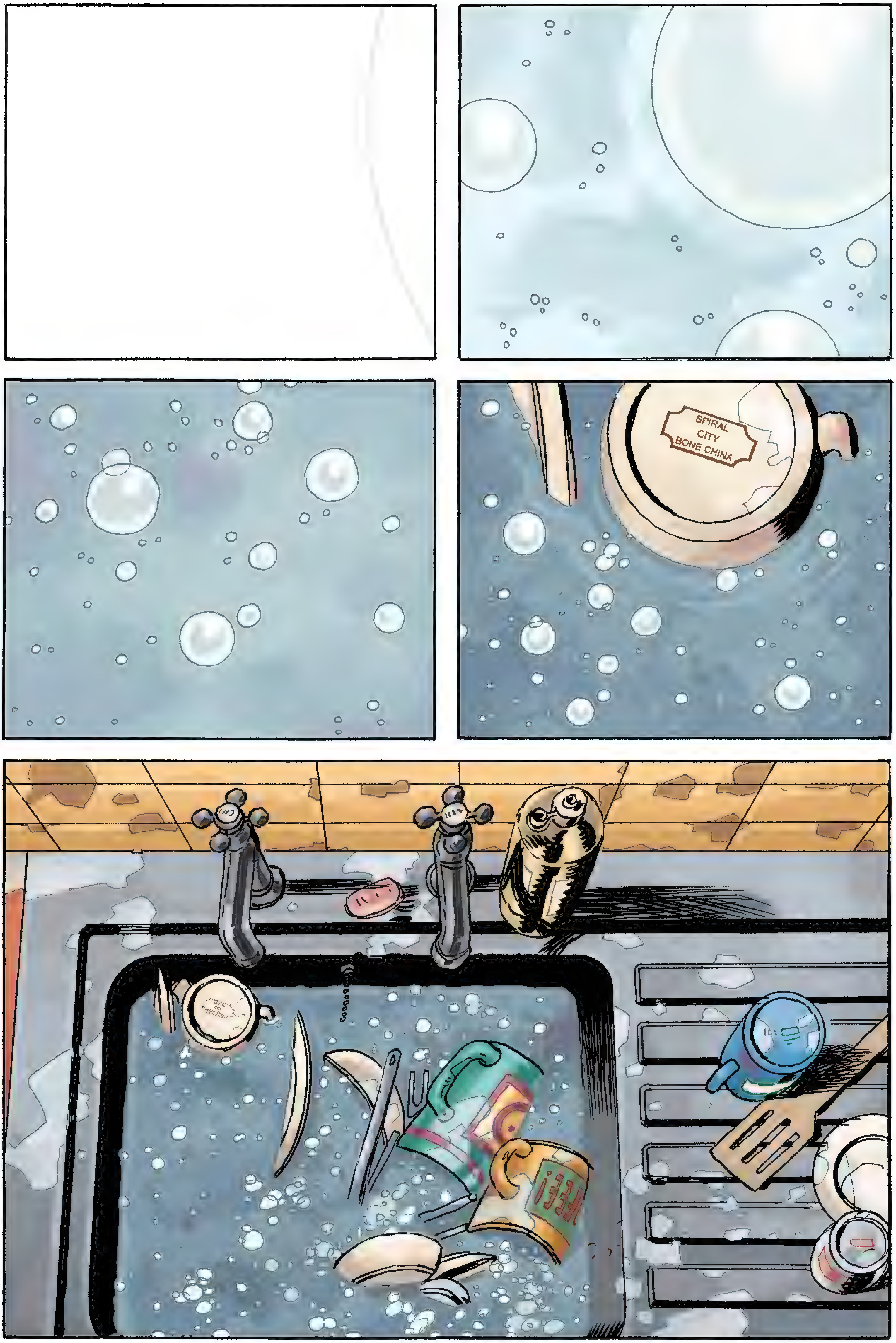
WHEN REALITY WAS OVERWRITTEN I FORGOT EVERYTHING. IT TOOK ME WEEKS TO WORK IT ALL OUT...AND *HERE YOU ARE.*
BUT LOOK AT ME. I MADE IT OFF THE FARM BUT I'M STILL *TRAPPED* LIKE THIS.
IF I CHANGE BACK, MY MIND IS...WELL, I'M *NOT ME.*
THE SITUATION IS DIRE. WE HAVE NO CHOICE.
IF WE DON'T GO, EVERYTHING HERE *ENDS.*
BUT--
MY DEAR...WE'VE FOUND EACH OTHER...AND NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS NEXT WE WILL FACE IT *TOGETHER.* THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO FEAR.
SHRACK!!
SOMETHING'S HAPPENING!


The rip...in the sky...in all skies...widens... the pattern closes.
WE NEED TO GO BACK. WE CAN'T *WAIT* ANY LONGER.
WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU, DRAGONFLY...
I--I DON'T KNOW IF I *CAN.* I DON'T KNOW IF I HAVE IT IN ME.
I BELIEVE IN YOU, DRAGONFLY... I BELIEVE IN *ALL OF YOU.* I ALWAYS HAVE.
WHAT IF SHE'S RIGHT? WHAT IF IT DOESN'T WORK? WHAT IF WE ALL REALLY *DIE* THIS TIME?
AT LEAST WE DIE TOGETHER, GAIL. DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I WOULDN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY.

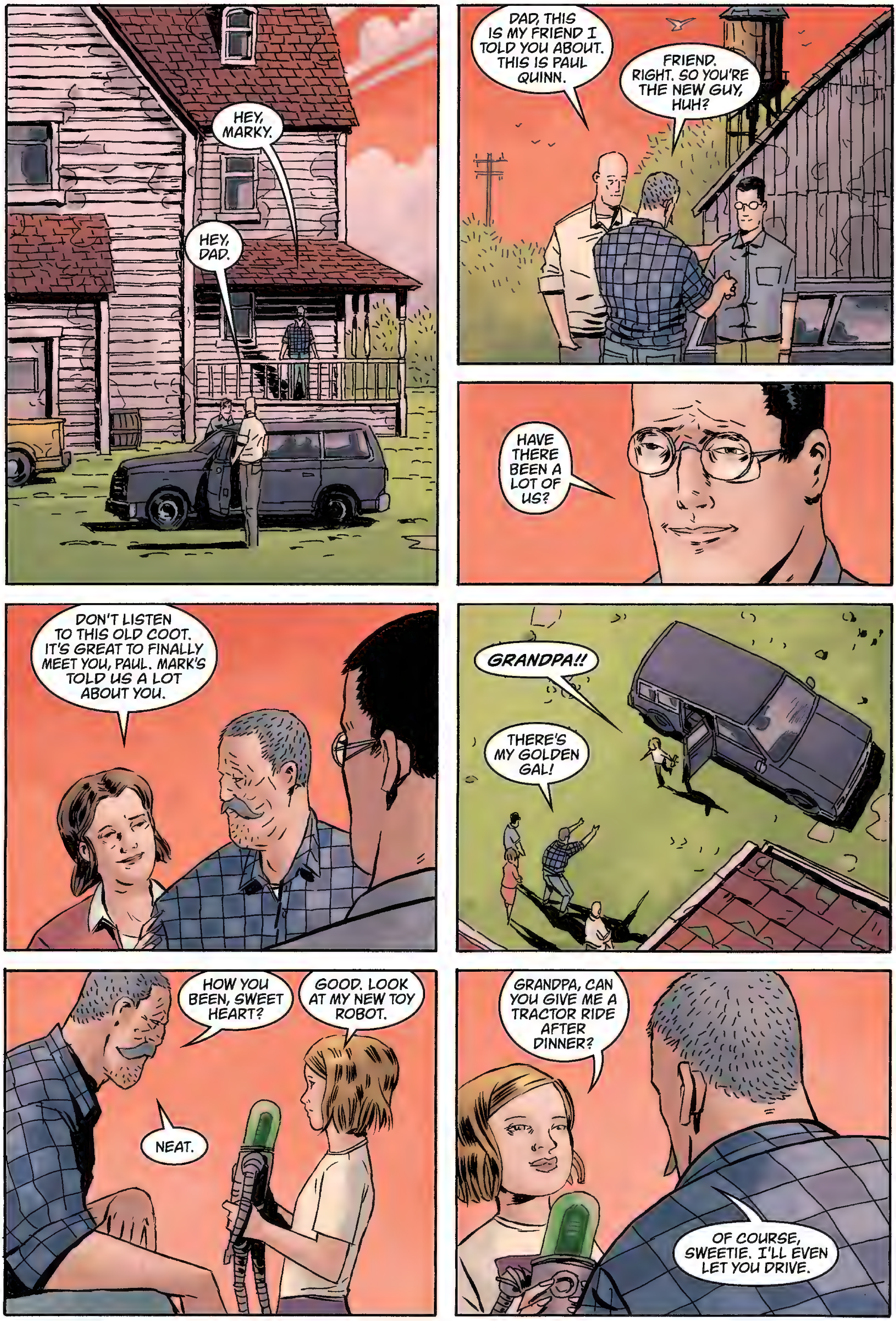

KR-KOOOM!!
WE HAVE TO DO IT NOW!
But--the Para-zone closed. Even if Madame Dragonfly's spell works, we'll have nowhere to hide.
I--I MAY HAVE ANOTHER WAY. I'M NOT SURE IF IT WILL WORK, BUT--
WE HAVE NO CHOICE, DRAGONFLY. IT'S NOW OR NEVER!
I-- I'LL TRY.
I'M SORRY I WAS SUCH A BRAT, ABE.
YOU WERE PERFECT...MAYBE TRY TO BE A BIT HAPPIER THIS TIME IF THIS WORKS THOUGH, DEAL?
DEAL.
HE'S COMING!! WE'RE TOO LATE!
NO! NOT TOO LATE...

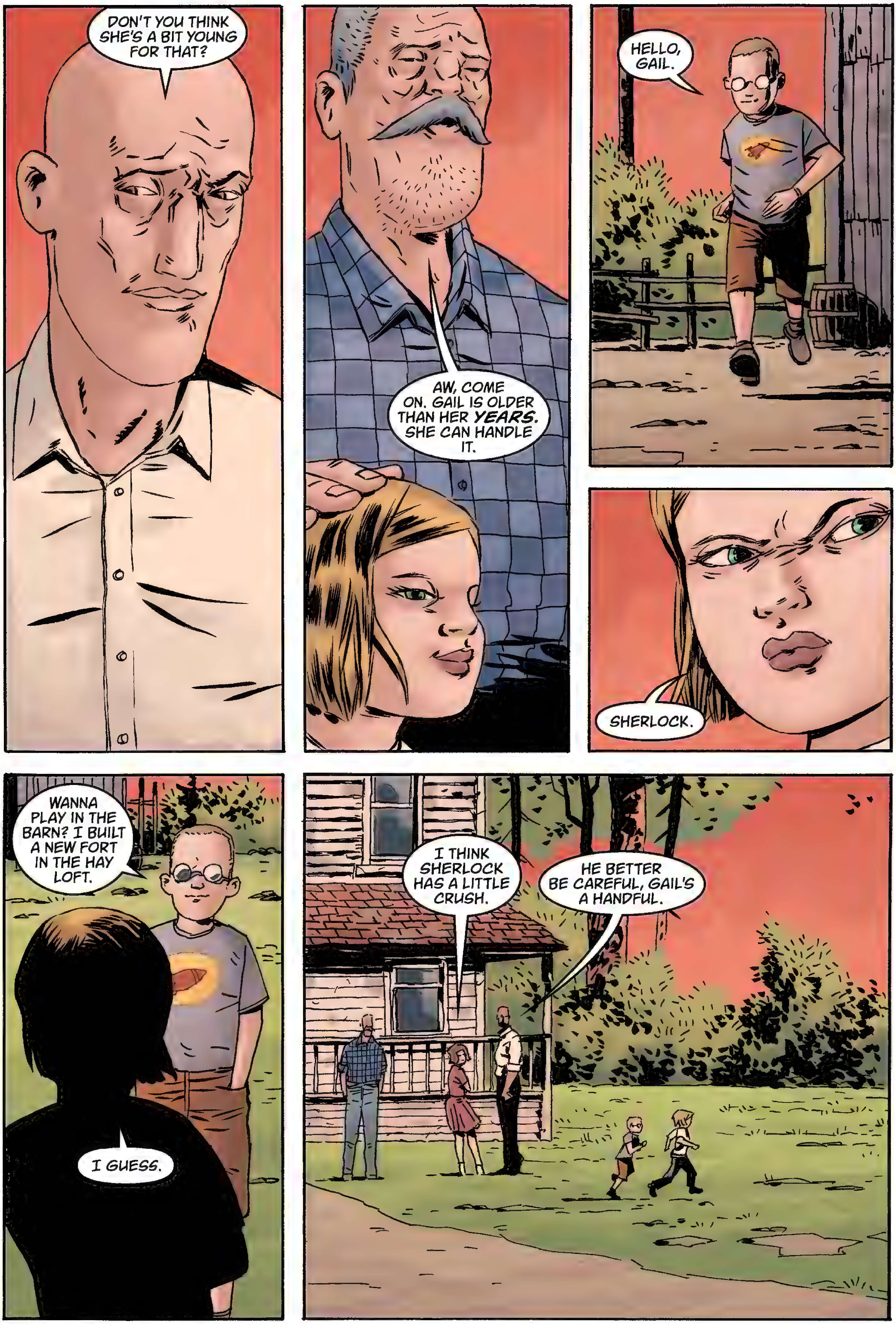
HURRY!!
ABE?! WHAT ARE YOU--?
A LEAP OF FAITH, BARBIE! SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE!
YOU READY, MY LOVE?
IF YOU ARE, BALDY.
IT HAS BEEN A TRUE HONOR SERVING WITH YOU, COLONEL.
You are my all-time favorite robot, Talky.

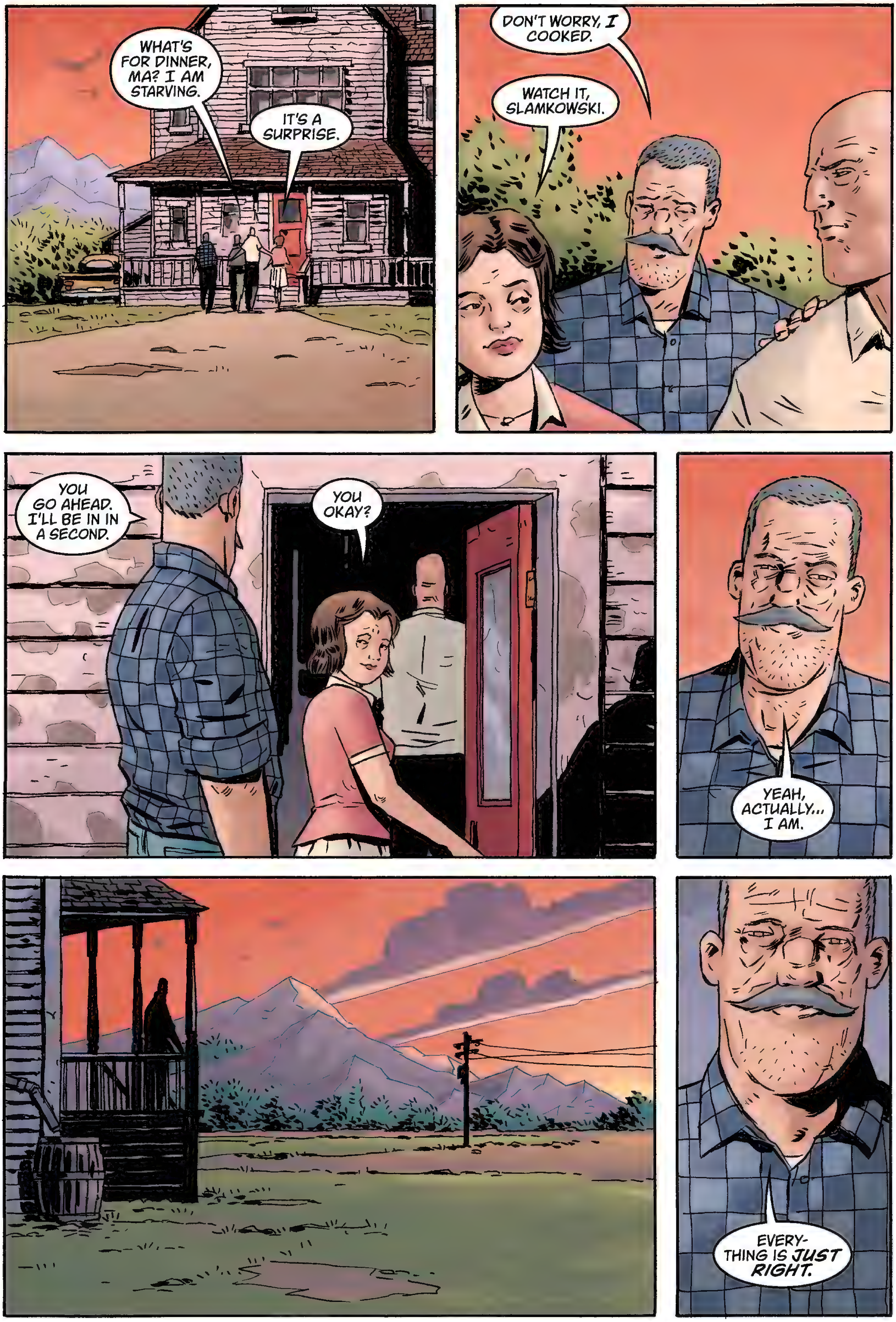
CLOSE IT! CLOSE IT NOW!!

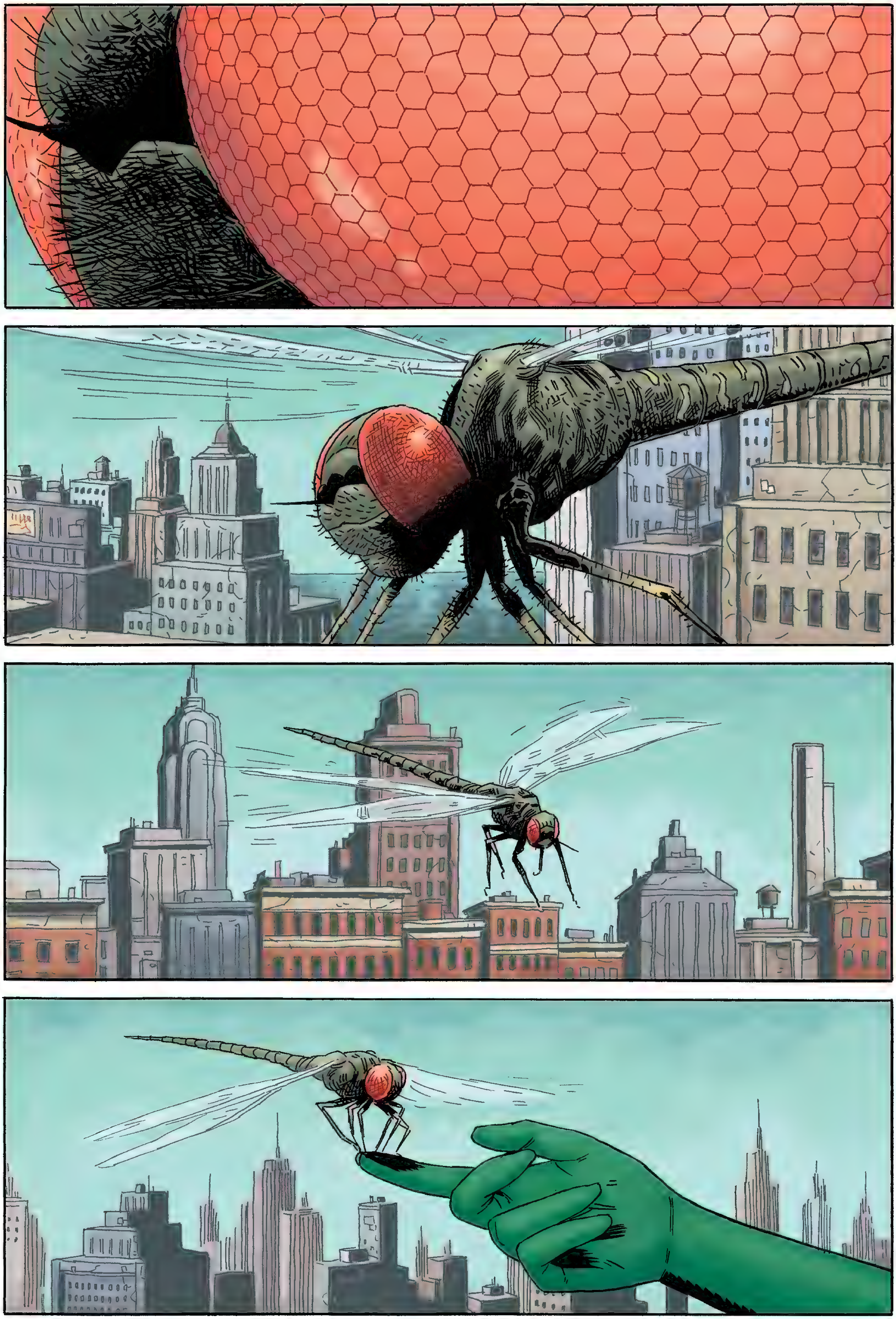

SPIRAL
CITY
BONE CHINA

HEY, HANDSOME, THANKS FOR WASHING UP. THE KIDS WILL BE HERE SOON. I HAD TO SHOWER AND CHANGE.
I'D RATHER HAVE HELPED YOU WITH *THAT.*
ABRAHAM SLAMKOWSKI, YOU ARE A DIRTY OLD MAN. AND I LOVE YOU.
LOVE YOU TOO, MRS. SLAMKOWSKI.
THERE'S MARK.
EARLY AS ALWAYS.


HEY, MARKY.
HEY, DAD.
DAD, THIS IS MY FRIEND I TOLD YOU ABOUT. THIS IS PAUL QUINN.
FRIEND. RIGHT. SO YOU'RE THE NEW GUY, HUH?
HAVE THERE BEEN A LOT OF US?
DON'T LISTEN TO THIS OLD COOT. IT'S GREAT TO FINALLY MEET YOU, PAUL. MARK'S TOLD US A LOT ABOUT YOU.
GRANDPA!!
THERE'S MY GOLDEN GAL!
HOW YOU BEEN, SWEET HEART?
GOOD. LOOK AT MY NEW TOY ROBOT.
NEAT.
GRANDPA, CAN YOU GIVE ME A TRACTOR RIDE AFTER DINNER?
OF COURSE, SWEETIE. I'LL EVEN LET YOU DRIVE.


DON'T YOU THINK SHE'S A BIT YOUNG FOR THAT?
AW, COME ON. GAIL IS OLDER THAN HER *YEARS.* SHE CAN HANDLE IT.
HELLO, GAIL.
SHERLOCK.
WANNA PLAY IN THE BARN? I BUILT A NEW FORT IN THE HAY LOFT.
I GUESS.
I THINK SHERLOCK HAS A LITTLE CRUSH.
HE BETTER BE CAREFUL, GAIL'S A HANDFUL.


WHAT'S FOR DINNER, MA? I AM STARVING.
IT'S A SURPRISE.
DON'T WORRY, *I* COOKED.
WATCH IT, SLAMKOWSKI.
YOU GO AHEAD. I'LL BE IN IN A SECOND.
YOU OKAY?
YEAH, ACTUALLY... I AM.
EVERYTHING IS *JUST RIGHT.*



GLOBAL PLA
THE END

23
24
freak
YOUR
BOYFRIEND
SQUID HEAD
27

LOOOUOIIIIIISE!
EVERY NIGHT MY **GRANDPA** CALLS ME.
LOOOOUIIIISSE-- COME TO ME--
I DON'T MEAN THAT HE CALLS ME ON THE PHONE. I MEAN THAT HE CALLS ME IN **MY DREAMS**.
AND BY "MY GRANDPA" I MEAN SOME CRAZY, OTHERWORLDLY ENTITY THAT LIVES BELOW SPIRAL CITY.
LOOOOUIIIISE--
SEE, MY FAMILY LIFE ISN'T EXACTLY NORMAL AND MY FAMILY ISN'T EXACTLY **LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE'S**...

MY NAME IS LOUISE AND I'M A MONSTER.
LOUISE! WAKE UP! GET DOWN HERE!
YAWN I'M UP!
SPEAKING OF MONSTERS... THAT VOICE COMING FROM BELOW...THAT ONE'S MY MOM. A REAL BEAST.
MY MOM MAY BE A BEAST...BUT IT'S MY DAD WHO IS THE MONSTER LIKE ME...

I WAS NAMED AFTER MY DAD. HIS NAME IS LOU. LOU KAMINSKI. HE WAS A PLUMBER.
BUT WE LIVE IN SPIRAL CITY U.S.A. AND EVERYONE KNOWS WEIRD SHIT IS **ALWAYS** HAPPENING IN SPIRAL CITY. (PLEASE DON'T TELL MY MOM I SAID "SHIT").
LOUUUUU--
MY DAD WAS SUMMONED TO THE SEWER BELOW SPIRAL. THAT'S WHERE "GRANDPA" LIVES.
THIS THING UNDER THE CITY, IT'S SOME SUPER-GROSS TENTACLE MONSTER. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN TOO SCARED TO ASK ANY MORE ABOUT IT.
ARRRGHHH!!
ANYWAYS, THIS THING IN THE SEWER CHANGED MY DAD INTO "CTHU-LOU." AND THEN HE AND MY MOM HAD ME AND I TOOK AFTER HIM.
MY DAD WAS A SUPER VILLAIN FOR A WHILE. BUT HE GOT BORED WITH THAT (AND PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING ELSE) AND "RETIRED."

THESE DAYS HE PRETTY MUCH JUST SITS AROUND THE HOUSE SMOKING AND GETTING DRUNK.
THERE YOU ARE! ABOUT TIME, LOUISE! I NEED TO GET TO WORK.
WOULD YOU KEEP IT DOWN? I HAVE A HEADACHE.
MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T **DRINK A FIFTH** EVERY NIGHT THEN, LOU.
WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG? YOU THINK I **LIKE** GETTING UP EARLY TO MAKE YOU BREAKFAST?
BUT-- IT'S JUST CEREAL.
JUST CEREAL?! YOU DON'T LIKE IT, GET YOUR ASS OUT OF BED SOONER AND MAKE YOURSELF SOMETHING.
HONEY BAL
WHATEVER.
HEY! YOU DON'T SPEAK TO YOUR MOTHER LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE!
...
SORRY, DADDY.

BOOK NOOK
2ND NATURE
SALE
HI DOG
$15.99
THE LUNAR SURFACE
EVEN THOUGH CRAZY STUFF HAPPENS HERE ALL THE TIME, PEOPLE STILL ACT LIKE THEY'VE NEVER SEEN A LITTLE GIRL WITH TENTACLES BEFORE.
I ACT LIKE IT'S NO BIG DEAL, BUT IT IS. EVERY MORNING IT'S THE SAME. THE STARING. THE LOOKS OF DISGUST.
I WISH I HAD A MASK. I WISH I HAD A DISGUISE...I--I JUST WISH I **WASN'T ME.**
AND THIS ISN'T EVEN THE **WORST PART** OF MY DAY...

WASH YOUR HANDS
...THAT HONOR IS RESERVED FOR THE **SPECIAL CIRCLE OF HELL** CALLED SPIRAL NUMBER FIFTY-SEVEN PUBLIC SCHOOL.
--AND OF COURSE THAT WAS THE BATTLE OF YPRES...
...WHERE THE ALLIES, WITH THE HELP OF ABRAHAM SLAM AND THE BLACK HAMMER SQUADRON, TURNED THE TIDE OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR.
AND THIS IS ALSO NOTABLE BECAUSE THE SCIENTISTS THE BLACK HAMMER SQUADRON RESCUED ENDED UP HELPING **NASA** DEVELOP PROJECT ***W.E.I.R.D.***
OKAY, CLASS, THAT'S IT FOR HISTORY TODAY, LET'S TAKE OUT OUR SPELLING HOMEWORK NOW.

MATH
SNICKER
HAHA!!
LOUISE'S BOYFRIEND
WHAT'S THE MATTER, SQUID TITS? DON'T LIKE THE NEW FUCK BUDDY WE FOUND YOU?
THAT'S... NOT... FUNNY...

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO *DO* ABOUT IT, OCTOPUSSY?
JUST STOP!
YOU SHOULDN'T *BE* IN THIS SCHOOL, LOUISE. YOU MAKE US ALL SICK!
FUCKING FREAK!
HA HAHA HA!

LOOOUISE--
H-HELLO?
LOOOUISE--
THE TIME HAS COME—THE STARS TURN—YOU MUST RISE!
NO!
YESSSSS—
COME TO ME, CHILD—
COME TO MEEEE!!

HI, DADDY.
GOOD YOU'RE HOME. YOU NEED TO MAKE DINNER AND CLEAN UP AROUND HERE. PLACE IS A DUMP AND YOUR MOTHER IS WORKING A DOUBLE.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH *YOU?*
NOTHING.
BULLSHIT. YOU'RE POUTING. YOU KNOW I HATE WHEN YOU POUT LIKE SOME LITTLE BABY.

IT'S ALL **YOUR** FAULT!!
EXCUSE ME?!
YOU MADE ME LIKE THIS! IT'S **YOUR FAULT!**
SHUTTUP!
TOLD YOU NOT TO TALK BACK!
NOW, STOP CRYING AND MAKE ME SOME **DAMN DINNER!**

HEY!
AH, FINE, BE A BABY. BUT I TELL YOU ONE THING, YOU BETTER GET USED TO IT! YOU EITHER TOUGHEN UP, OR YOU GET CRUSHED, KID! THIS IS THE WAY WE ARE!
...THERE AIN'T NO CHANGING IT.
THIS IS WHO WE ARE.
THERE ISN'T ANY CHANGING IT.
BUT WHAT IF THERE IS?
WHAT IF I CAN CHANGE IT?

Mom & DAD
I'm sorry but I am not happy here and
I don't think either of you really like me
that much anyway.
So I am going away.
And I'm not coming back unless I
can find a way to change things.
you may not love me and
that's okay. I understand.
But I loved you
anyway.
Louise

ONE THING'S FOR SURE, I WON'T DREAM TONIGHT.
I WON'T NEED TO, BECAUSE I'M *FINALLY* DOING IT...
...I'M GIVING IN.

I'VE FINALLY COME TO VISIT YOU, GRANDPA.
LOOOOUIIIISE--
I--I'M HERE.
IT'S ABOUT TIME.

YOUR FATHER HAS FORSAKEN HIS DUTIES AS OFFICIAL EMISSARY FOR THE ***GREAT OLD ONE.*** THE MANY-ANGLED ONE IS ANGRY.
WELL, ***I'M*** ANGRY TOO!
I DIDN'T ASK TO BE BORN LIKE THIS!
I--I JUST WANT YOU TO ***MAKE ME NORMAL!*** PLEASE!
I JUST WANT TO BE LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

XOTH-LOUISE--LOOOOUUUIISE--XOTH TALBA-SIKBA!
HE SAYS, HE CAN DO WHAT YOU ASK, BUT THERE WILL BE *A PRICE TO PAY.*
ANYTHING! I'LL DO ANYTHING!
THE GREAT OLD ONE IS *HUNGRY.* YOUR FATHER HAS NOT FED HIM IN MANY YEARS. HE REQUIRES SACRIFICE.
IF YOU REALLY WANT HIM TO MAKE YOU LIKE EVERYONE ELSE--YOU MUST *KILL FOR HIM!*
NO!
YES. IT IS THE *ONLY WAY.* THAT IS THE PRICE HE DEMANDS! *KILL FOR US! FEED HIM!* BECOME HIS *TRUE* CHILD AT LAST!
LOOOUUUISE--
LOUUISSE--FEED ME--KILL FOR ME--
NO!

THISSSS WORLD ISSS NOT FOR YOOOOOUUU--
THISS WORLD IS PAIN AND MOCKERY--LET ME HELP YOU--
DO AS I ASK LOOUUISE AND I WILL DO AS YOU ASK!
FINE! I--I'LL DO IT!
HOW MANY?
HOW MANY DO I HAVE TO KILL?

--AND THAT, CLASS, IS HOW THE LIBERTY SQUADRON HELPED RECAPTURE FRANCE FROM THE GERMANS.
SCHOOL
NOW, DOES ANYONE KNOW WHICH HEROES HELPED THE UNITED STATES WIN THE VIETNAM WAR? ANYONE?
VIETNAM WAR
LOUISE?! YOU'RE LATE!
I'M SO SORRY, MR. TITCH. I WAS NOT FEELING WELL.
TSK WELL, JUST TAKE YOUR SEAT.
YES, SIR.
PTT
HEE HEE!

YOU SMELL LIKE SHIT!
LIKE ROTTEN CALAMARI! HAHA!
SQUID FACE
HEY, SQUID. WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? FALL INTO THE TOILET?
19
I THINK YOUR MOM NEEDS TO CHANGE THE WATER IN YOUR TANK, FREAK.
WHAT'S WRONG? GOING TO CRY, CTHU-LOUISE?
NO. I'M NOT GOING TO CRY. NOT EVER AGAIN.
BUT YOU WILL.

AAARRRGGHHH!!
LOUISE XOTH TABLA SIGNA! LOUISE XOTH CIXIN TAKA!
AAAAHHH!!

I DID IT. I KILLED THEM.
NOW IT'S YOUR TURN. MAKE ME LIKE EVERYONE ELSE!

LOUUUISE IS A VERRY GOOD GIRL. LOOOOOUISE HASS EARNED HER REWARD.
WHAT-- WHAT'S THIS?
THIS IS YOUR REWARD.
WHAT? BUT THAT'S NOT--
I JUST WANT TO BE NORMAL! YOU PROMISED!
YES. AND THIS IS THE WAY TO YOUR PROMISE... I PROMISE.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS AT ALL!
YOU WILL, MY CHILD...HAVE FAITH IN THE OLD ONE.

NOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!
DO NOT FEAR, MY CHILD. THIS IS A GATEWAY...
I AM TAKING YOU HOME--ACROSS SPACE AND TIME--

WH-WHERE--?!
I HAVE TAKEN YOU TO WHERE I CAME FROM!
WHERE YOU CAME FROM? I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
YOUR WISH HAS BEEN FULFILLED.
NO MORE PAIN. NO MORE MOCKERY. THIS IS WHERE YOU BELONG.

WELCOME HOME, LOUISE.
NOW YOU ARE NORMAL.
NOW YOU ARE JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.
THE END

SOR
REN
TIN
O·18

THE WORLD OF BLACK HAMMER ENCYCLOPEDIA

WRITERS
TATE BROMBAL
with JEFF LEMIRE

ARTISTS
DAVID RUBÍN
WILFREDO TORRES
TYLER CROOK
CHRISTIAN WARD
TONCI ZONJIC
MATT KINDT
EMI LENOX
RAY FAWKES
BRIAN HURTT
LUCY SULLIVAN
MARIE ENGER
RICH TOMMASO
SANDY JARRELL
SINA GRACE
DAVE STEWART

COVER BY
ANDREA SORRENTINO

BLACK HAMMER CREATED BY
JEFF LEMIRE AND DEAN ORMSTON

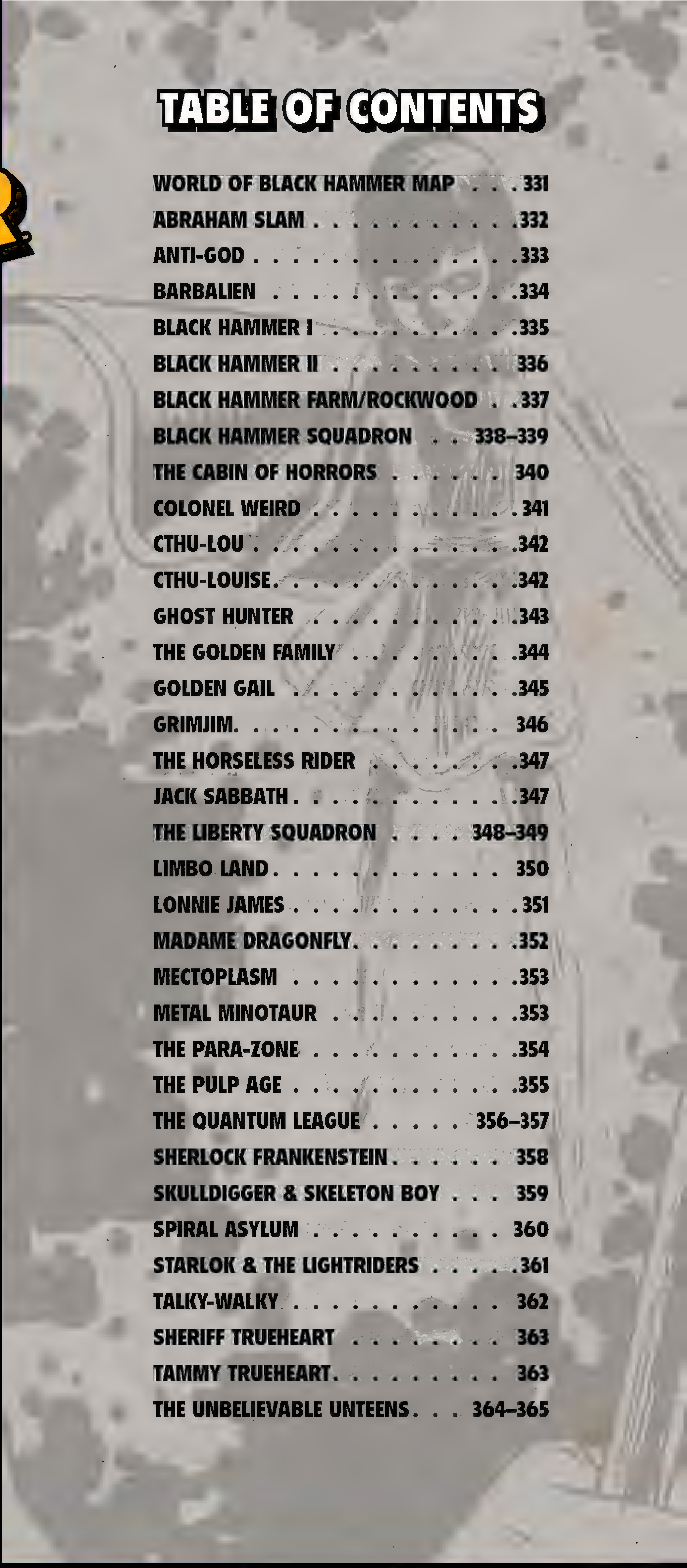


TABLE OF CONTENTS

WORLD OF BLACK HAMMER MAP . . . 331
ABRAHAM SLAM 332
ANTI-GOD 333
BARBALIEN 334
BLACK HAMMER I 335
BLACK HAMMER II 336
BLACK HAMMER FARM/ROCKWOOD . . .337
BLACK HAMMER SQUADRON . . . 338–339
THE CABIN OF HORRORS 340
COLONEL WEIRD 341
CTHU-LOU 342
CTHU-LOUISE. 342
GHOST HUNTER 343
THE GOLDEN FAMILY 344
GOLDEN GAIL 345
GRIMJIM. 346
THE HORSELESS RIDER 347
JACK SABBATH 347
THE LIBERTY SQUADRON 348–349
LIMBO LAND 350
LONNIE JAMES 351
MADAME DRAGONFLY. 352
MECTOPLASM 353
METAL MINOTAUR 353
THE PARA-ZONE 354
THE PULP AGE 355
THE QUANTUM LEAGUE 356–357
SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN 358
SKULLDIGGER & SKELETON BOY . . . 359
SPIRAL ASYLUM 360
STARLOK & THE LIGHTRIDERS 361
TALKY-WALKY 362
SHERIFF TRUEHEART 363
TAMMY TRUEHEART. 363
THE UNBELIEVABLE UNTEENS. . . 364–365

THE WORLD OF BLACK HAMMER

1890s
VICTORIAN AGE

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN

1920s
THE PULP AGE

New age of pulp heroes in Spiral City:
DOC STEELE
TAZARA
THE CRIMSON FIST

Nazi Super Soldiers:
THE GHOST HUNTER
BARON VON FANG

1940s
THE GOLDEN AGE

World War II

GOLDEN GAIL

ABRAHAM SLAM

DOCTOR ANDROMEDA

THE LIBERTY SQUADRON forms to battle Hitler in Europe

DOCTOR NIGHT & CAPTAIN DAY

HORSELESS RIDER

WINGMAN

THE BLACK HAMMER SQUADRON

1950s-60s
THE SILVER AGE

BARBALIEN

COLONEL WEIRD

DOCTOR ANDROMEDA discovers **THE PARA-ZONE,** interdimensional infrastructure underneath all space and time

Inspired by DOCTOR ANDROMEDA, intergalactic police force the Star Sheriff Squadron forms

SPIRAL ASYLUM for the criminally insane opens. Inmates include many of Spiral City's greatest villains:
GRIMJIM
TENTERHOOKS
SULTRIX
BLACK STALLION
MECTOPLASM
CTHU-LOU
METAL MINOTAUR

NEW WORLD:
STARLOK & THE LIGHTRIDERS
THE ESCAPER
WHIPTARA

1970s
THE BRONZE AGE

BLACK HAMMER

MADAME DRAGONFLY

THE CABIN OF HORRORS

THE CABIN is a gateway to an entire multiverse of populated supernatural worlds

LIMBOWORLD:
Home of heroes from all the unfinished stories never written

1980s
THE CATACLYSM

THE CATACLYSM!
ANTI-GOD attacks the universe

Spiral City's heroes stranded on **BLACK HAMMER FARM**

1990s
THE GRIM AGE

SKULLDIGGER & SKELETON BOY

THE UNTEENS

LUCY WEBER, daughter of BLACK HAMMER, searches for and finds the Farm

LUCY becomes the new BLACK HAMMER

100 YEARS INTO THE FUTURE
THE QUANTUM AGE

THE QUANTUM AGE! One hundred years into the future, a group of teenagers, inspired by the heroes of Spiral City's past, form the QUANTUM LEAGUE

COLONEL WEIRD & MADAME DRAGONFLY emerge in the era of the QUANTUM LEAGUE

ABRAHAM SLAM

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: *Abraham Slamkowski*
Occupation: *Professional Boxer; Farmer*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Unknown*
Group Affiliation: *The Liberty Squadron*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: Black Hammer *#1*
Height: *6′2″* ***Weight:*** *240 lbs.*
Eyes: *Brown* ***Hair:*** *Gray (formerly brown)*

HISTORY

Abraham Slamkowski was born to a poor family in the ghettos of Spiral City's Lower East Side. As a young man, he hoped to join the American troops in the fight against the Axis during World War II. However, he was designated unfit for service, due to being short sighted, frail, and having weak lungs. Bullied and looked down upon, Slamkowski had all but given up, until professional boxer Punch Sockingham took notice of his drive and strong spirit. Punch invited him into his gym, and the rest is history!

Under Punch's guidance, Slamkowski trained hard, built up a robust frame, and became an incredible fighter. He was well on his way to becoming the next great professional boxer and was christened "Abraham Slam" by Punch. Until, one day, a group of mobsters arrived at Sockingham Boxing Gym and shot Punch for his unpaid debts. Slamkowski reacted quickly and knocked the men unconscious, but it was too late . . . Punch died in his young protégé's arms.

Inspired by Punch's legacy and now under the guise of Abraham Slam, Slamkowski donned a flamboyant costume and began fighting crime on the streets of Spiral City. His first target: the mob responsible for Punch's murder. Slamkowski eventually joined the other Golden Age heroes as a part of the Liberty Squadron (see "The Liberty Squadron"). Together, they would head to Europe and battle the Nazi forces—playing a key role in the Axis's demise. Slamkowski finally achieved his lifelong dream of fighting for America.

As he continued through the Silver and Bronze Ages of heroes, Slamkowski aged and began questioning his relevancy. After nearly being defeated by the first iteration of Cthu-Lou (see "Cthu-Lou"), Black Hammer (see "Black Hammer I") had to step in and rescue him. Slamkowski may have been saved but his ego was deeply bruised. He decided he needed to upgrade his armor and weaponry in order to stay with the times. However, this eventually proved futile when he was once again defeated by a supervillain far outside his weight class. Abraham Slam finally decided to hang up his costume.

Nevertheless, during the first Cataclysm, Abraham Slam was called back into action alongside Earth's remaining heroes against the nefarious Anti-God (see "Anti-God"). When Black Hammer dealt his killing blow, Slamkowski and the other heroes mysteriously disappeared and are still missing . . .

POWERS & WEAPONS

Though he has no superpowers, Abraham Slam is a trained fighter and gymnast. He is remarkably strong and tough, as well as agile. Slamkowski is a gifted boxer and never backs down from a fight.

Art by Wilfredo Torres with Dave Stewart

ANTI-GOD

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *None*
Occupation: *Conqueror*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Starlok (twin brother)*
Group Affiliation: *None*
Base of Operations: *The Anti-Moon*
First Appearance: *Black Hammer #1*
Height: *∞*　***Weight:*** *∞*
Eyes: *Red*　***Hair:*** *∞*

HISTORY

Not much is known about the origins of Anti-God, only that he is Starlok's estranged and nefarious twin (see "Starlok & the Lightriders"). He counters his brother's heavenly light with apocalyptic darkness, and the balance of the universe depends on him for this. However Anti-God tipped that balance in his favor during the first Great Cataclysm on Earth. He took on the greatest heroes that the universe could throw at him, and he easily overpowered them. Anti-God was eventually defeated by Black Hammer (see "Black Hammer I") and the rest of Spiral City's heroes—disappearing alongside them in the act.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Anti-God can exploit vast cosmic power. This enables him to wield and reshape matter, unleash planet-shaking energy blasts, and teleport tremendous distances. The extent of his powers is unknowable, however, along with whether or not he can truly be killed.

Art by Tyler Crook

BARBALIEN

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: *Mark Markz*
Occupation: *Police Officer*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Marv Marvz (father, deceased); Myrt Myrtz (mother, deceased)*
Group Affiliation: *None*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: *Black Hammer #1*
Height: *7'0"* ***Weight:*** *300 lbs.*
Eyes: *Blue* ***Hair:*** *None*

Art by Sina Grace

HISTORY

Mark Markz, a Martian diplomat from the red tribes of Mars, was looked down upon by his people for his pacifist views and for the rumors of his homosexuality. He, however, was a Martian of great wisdom and compassion. When a NASA spacecraft crash-landed on Mars, he championed words over war when debating the fate of the green planet, Earth. As a result, the Martians of Mars delegated Markz to be sent to Earth to infiltrate the humans and report back on his findings.

Landed on Earth, Markz quickly found himself in the middle of a police shootout at Spiral City's waterfront. After swiftly defeating the mobsters with his superior strength, Markz used his natural talent to shapeshift into a murdered cop and then dumped his corpse in the bay. He quickly picked up the English language and infiltrated Spiral City's police force. His Martian mission didn't last long, however, as Markz soon found himself falling in love with planet Earth and abandoned any espionage. He instead established a stellar career in the Spiral City police department. During his off hours, he fought crime on the streets as Barbalien, the Warlord of Mars.

Eventually, after years of close friendship with his police partner, Cole, Markz hoped that their partnership could become something more. He soon learned, however, that planet Earth was not so different from his home planet of Mars, after all. Cole rejected Markz in a furious rage and abandoned him on the street. Markz became the subject of cruel, homophobic harassment at his workplace. Eventually, he succumbed to the cruelty and turned in his badge. Blatant homophobia, ignorance, and hate had ended the career of one of Spiral City's finest policemen.

Markz wouldn't give up his superheroics, though. When Anti-God (see "Anti-God") appeared during the first Cataclysm, Markz joined in the fight alongside the remainder of Earth's heroes. He, too, disappeared in the aftermath of Anti-God's defeat and hasn't been seen since . . .

POWERS & WEAPONS

All Martians possess several innate abilities, including superior strength, speed, agility, and the ability to fly. Martian skin is impervious to pain and damage. They can also change their shapes at will and impersonate others.

In addition to his superhuman abilities, Markz is also a highly skilled detective with above-average intelligence. He is an expert at all forms of hand-to-hand combat and is trained in the art of Martian warfare. He is a master swordsman and marksman and is often seen with his trusty sword and Martian blaster.

BLACK HAMMER I

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *Joseph Weber*
Occupation: *Police Officer; Social Worker*
Marital Status: *Married*
Known Relatives: *Lorraine Weber (wife),*
Lucy Weber (daughter)
Group Affiliation: *The Lightriders*
Base of Operations: *Hall of Hammer*
First Appearance: *Black Hammer #1*
Height: *6'6" (6'0" as Joseph)*
Weight: *645 lbs. (240 lbs. as Joseph)*
Eyes: *Brown* ***Hair:*** *Black*

Art by David Rubin

HISTORY

Joe Weber was an involved community member within the poorer slums of Spiral City. One night, after volunteering at the local soup kitchen, Weber stumbled upon the murder of a costumed superhero. The dying man told Joe that someone worthy always needed to wield his black hammer. When the hammer seemed to call to him, Weber grabbed hold of it. He was immediately transformed into Black Hammer and teleported to a heavenly world just outside our own—New World.

On New World, Weber was quickly welcomed by Starlok (see "Starlok & the Lightriders") who introduced him to the Lightriders and his new role as Black Hammer. Weber refused to call New World his new home and ignored Starlok's pleas. He teleported himself back to Spiral City. Upon his return, he discovered that he had been missing for four months and his wife, Lorraine, was with child.

Lorraine soon gave birth to a little girl named Lucy (see Black Hammer II), and Weber dedicated his time to raising his family and protecting his city. Weber eventually embraced his role as Black Hammer by monitoring and protecting both Earth and New World from those with ill intent.

On Lucy's tenth birthday, Starlok summoned Weber to New World, where Anti-God (see "Anti-God") had easily laid waste to the Lightriders and would soon be upon Earth. Having missed out on far too much of his daughter's life due to superheroics, Weber rejected Starlok's plea once again and sat down for cake. Little did he know, that this rejection of his cosmic duties would lead to Anti-God's arrival on Earth and initiate the first Cataclysm. Weber left his daughter's side and assembled the remainder of Earth's heroes. Together they battled Anti-God, and Black Hammer dealt the killing blow to Anti-God's cranium. However, in the aftermath, Black Hammer and the other heroes disappeared and have been missing ever since . . .

POWERS & WEAPONS

Black Hammer acquires his superhuman abilities from the titular hammer that he wields. These abilities include flight, superhuman strength, invulnerability, teleportation, and control over lightning.

The black hammer itself is one of the finest weapons in the omniverse. It is nigh indestructible and seems to have a working mind of its own. The hammer is able to choose worthy wielders and pass on superhuman abilities.

BLACK HAMMER II

Art by David Rubín

PERSONAL DATA
Full Name: *Lucy Weber*
Occupation: *Journalist*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Joseph Weber (father, deceased); Lorraine Weber (mother)*
Group Affiliation: *Global Planet Staff*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: Black Hammer *#1*
Height: *6'3" (5'9" as Lucy)*
Weight: *475lbs (154 lbs. as Lucy)*
Eyes: *Brown* ***Hair:*** *Black*

HISTORY
Born the daughter of Joseph Weber (see "Black Hammer I"), Lucy grew up under the influence of Earth's greatest hero. While her father was away saving the cosmos and Spiral City alike, Weber spent her time discovering a love for reading and writing. After the disappearance of her father during the first Cataclysm (see "Anti-God"), Weber dedicated the remainder of her adolescence searching for Black Hammer and the rest of Earth's missing heroes.

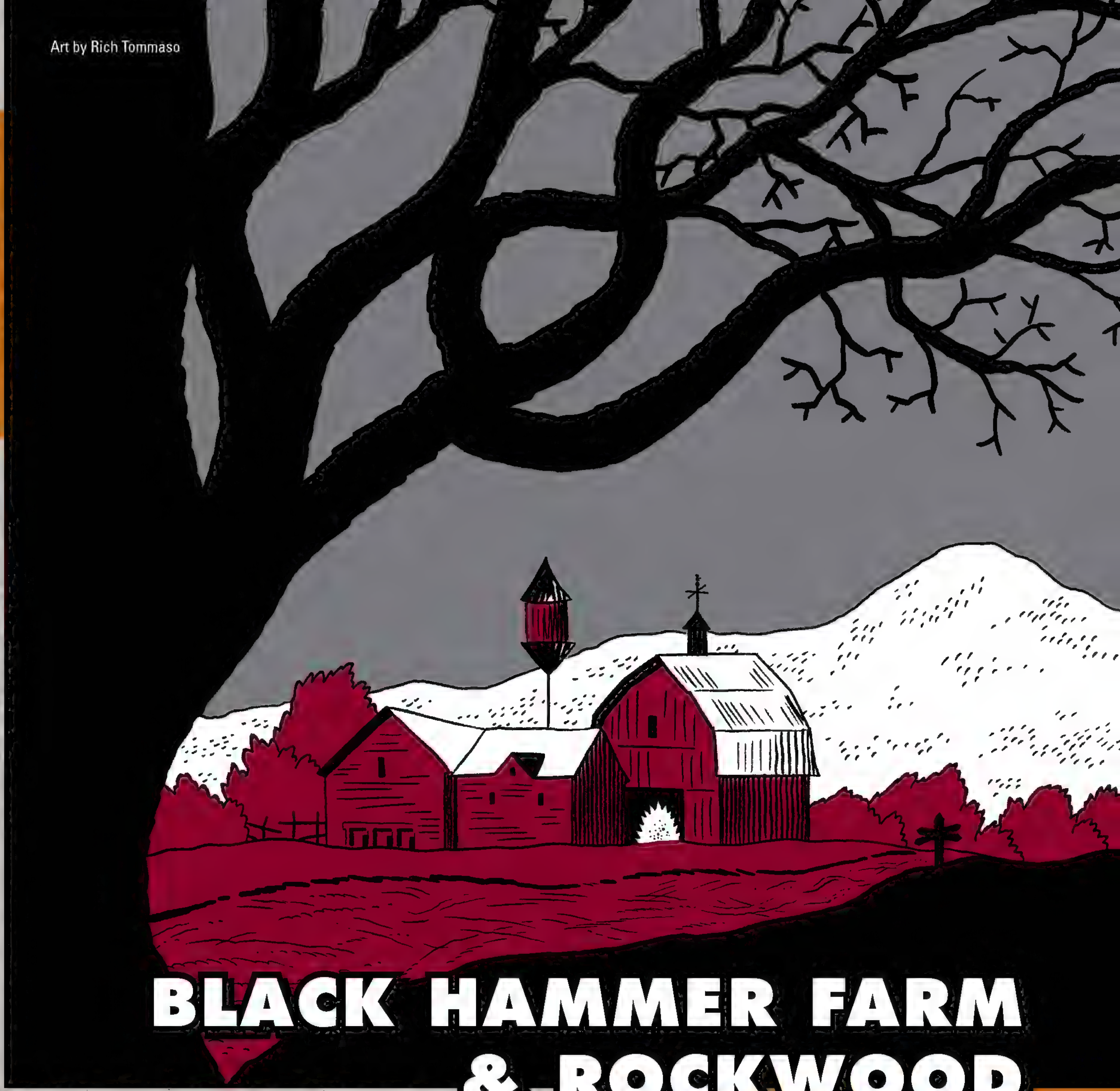
She attended journalism school at Spiral University and quickly became a gifted journalist. Her first story led her through a grocery list of Spiral City's greatest villains (see "Spiral City Asylum") and eventually into the hands of a reformed Sherlock Frankenstein (see "Sherlock Frankenstein"). Frankenstein had given up hope on finding the lost heroes, particularly his beloved Golden Gail (see "Golden Gail"), but Weber inspired the ghoulish doctor. As a result, Frankenstein began funding her search for the missing heroes.

Eventually, Lucy became a reporter at the Global Planet but never gave up searching for her father. She discovered a crashed probe that appeared to come from Colonel Weird's ship, and later tracked the cosmic doorway that it emerged from.

Soon after discovering that cosmic doorway, Weber herself disappeared . . .

POWERS & WEAPONS
Lucy eventually becomes Black Hammer, after picking up her father's fallen hammer, and acquires superhuman abilities. These abilities include flight, superhuman strength, invulnerability, teleportation, and control over lightning. Lucy also has a skilled investigative mind.

The black hammer itself is the one of the finest weapons in the omniverse. It is nigh indestructible and seems to have a working mind of its own. The hammer is able to choose worthy wielders and pass on superhuman abilities.

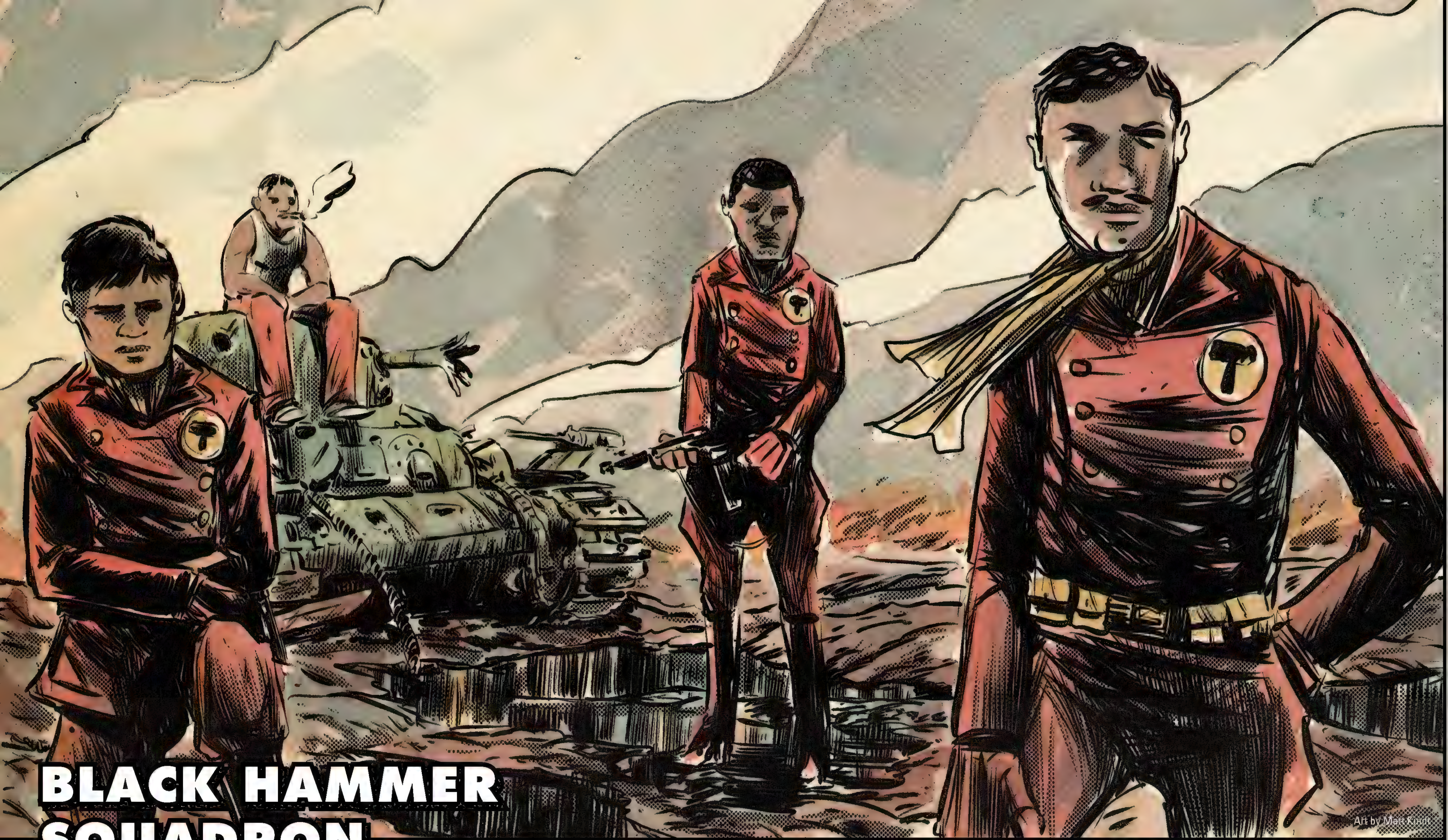

Art by Rich Tommaso

BLACK HAMMER FARM & ROCKWOOD

First Appearance: Black Hammer *#1*

HISTORY
While the small town of Rockwood may appear to be an unassuming, idyllic, and all-American municipality, it reveals itself to be a dreamy cage designed to imprison our wayward heroes. But don't worry, nothing ever goes wrong in Rockwood. No crime. No scandals. No wilting flowers. And **definitely** no liquified police officers. Rockwood is a perfect town with breathtaking prairie land and a flourishing techno scene. It is enclosed within a murderous dimensional bubble that holds everyone nice and snug within its lethal limits. Cross its boundaries and die! A great destination for the whole family after you've defeated a transdimensional conqueror and need to recover a healthy, harmonious balance. Life is dandy when you're a Rockwood vigilante.

On the outskirts of Rockwood lies an isolated farm . . . Black Hammer Farm, to be exact. It's the home of our wayward heroes—whether they like it or not!


Art by Matt Kindt

BLACK HAMMER SQUADRON

First Appearance: Black Hammer '45 *#1*

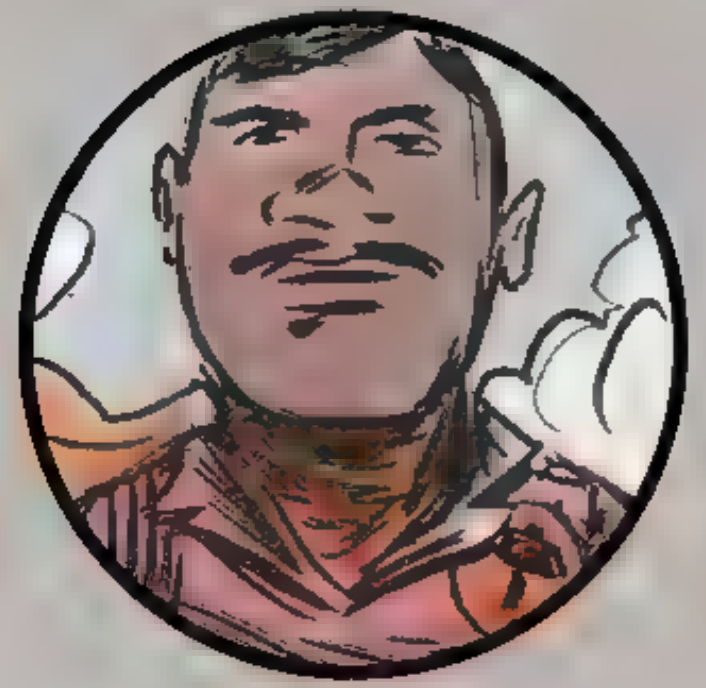
HISTORY

The Black Hammer Squadron was the greatest attack squadron of World War II, a unit forged and hand-picked to tackle the war's most dangerous missions. Under the leadership of Sidney "Hammer" Hawthorne, the Squadron was able to handle and contain some of the worst atrocities that the Axis unleashed. They were the terror of the Nazi machine—defeating their dreaded Nachtwulf Patrol, the mystical Drachenkriegers, and even the Ghost Hunter himself (see "Ghost Hunter"). The Black Hammer Squadron stepped up when evil loomed and everybody else buried their noses in the sand!

The Squadron was made up exclusively of soldiers of color and often, due to this, the American media wasn't quite as appreciative as the rest of the world. In the aftermath of the war, it was Abraham Slam and the Liberty Squadron that received most of the American public's praise. Either way, the Squadron knew and understood the difference that they made in the war effort. They **always** gave back five times what they got, and then some.

MEMBERS

GEORGE "GRIPS" McREADY


SIDNEY "HAMMER" HAWTHORNE

JOHN PAUL "JP" DESJARDINS

LI ZHANG YONG

Art by Ray Fawkes

THE CABIN OF HORRORS

First Appearance: Black Hammer *#1*

HISTORY

QUICK! TURN THE PAGE! I beg of you, dear reader . . . don't allow your eyes to lag. Control your urge! Colonel Weird's entry is much more palatable than this vile abode's. But if you must read on, earnest traveler, there will be nothing I can do to save your tainted soul. Once you discover this **wretched womb of wood**, its very image will light fire to your dreams! Your life will continue on, never satisfied. Your heart will thump with hollow, unfulfilled echoes. Your mind will scritch centipedes that—! Still here? Very well . . . Don't say I didn't warn you . . .

Not so far away that you can't reach it, the Cabin of Horrors awaits all who seek dark answers and harbor forgotten secrets. What lurks behind its groaning doors? What ghoulish beast holds key to both your demise and your rebirth? Its thirst, unquenchable. Its desires, undying. Feed it your stories, feed it your mysteries, and perhaps it will **spare** you. And, if you're unlucky enough, it will bargain your life for another's . . . bestowing you the Cabin's burden . . . Now, don't be afraid. Step up! You've come this far. Embrace the termites and daemons that lurk deep within its bowels . . . Wrap your little fingers between their many legs and howl until you croak!

Oh dear. What's this? Are those **wings** sprouting on your back? HA HA! They suit you well . . . Enjoy the cabin, my dear. You're its guardian now. If you hope to pass on this burden, I suppose you will need to tempt someone else into reading this page, won't you? **HAHAHAHA!**

COLONEL WEIRD

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *Randall Weird*
Notable Aliases: *Chronokus*
Occupation: *Astronaut, Interstellar Adventurer*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Unknown*
Group Affiliation: *None*
Base of Operations: *Moonbase 12, Para-zone*
First Appearance: Black Hammer #1
Height: *5'8"* ***Weight:*** *150 lbs.*
Eyes: *Brown* ***Hair:*** *White (originally blonde)*

Art by David Rubin

HISTORY
During a mission through the Osler star system, Randall Weird was directed to an uncharted planet in response to a distress signal. After arriving, Weird soon found himself in distress as he was chased across the planet by its flesh-hating, robotic inhabitants. He was rescued by the source of the planet's signal, a robot named TLK-E WLK-E (see "Talky-Walky"). The two escaped the planet together and eventually formed the universe's greatest interstellar partnership.

During one fateful mission for NASA, the duo explored the planet Virius-6. After promising his Earth-bound girlfriend, Eve, that he'd return in time for the New Year, Weird stumbled upon cave drawings of what appeared to be an ancient galactic map. Upon further investigation, Weird and Talky followed the map to its coordinates, only to discover a strange cosmic doorway. Against Talky's better judgment, Weird entered the portal and found himself transported to the Para-zone! Even worse, he was trapped!!

Nine years passed as Weird traveled through the timeless and spaceless interdimensional void of the Para-zone—until finally he found his way back to Earth and his beloved Eve. However, he had aged rapidly and had lost his sanity in the process. Eve begged Weird to take her into the Para-zone with him, even though he warned her of its risks. When they entered the Para-zone's cosmic doorway, those risks proved true, and Eve was torn apart layer-by-layer before Weird's very eyes.

With his interstellar adventures behind him, Weird began aimlessly floating between the Para-zone and Earth dimensions, constantly reliving past and future events. During the first Cataclysm after Anti-God's (see "Anti-God") arrival on Earth, Colonel Weird was one of the few costumed heroes left to aid in his defeat. He, too, went missing after Black Hammer's fatal strike against Anti-God and hasn't been seen since . . .

One hundred years in the future, Colonel Weird becomes Chronokus—one of the Quantum League's greatest foes (see "The Quantum League")!

POWERS & WEAPONS
Though the full extent of Weird's powers is unknown, he can apparently teleport incredible distances through space and time, phase through solid objects, float by seemingly defying gravity, and tap into the Para-zone's cosmic energies. In addition, Weird's NASA and Air Force training makes him an excellent hand-to-hand combatant and an accomplished pilot. He is often in the use of a flying rocket pack and a plasma blaster.

CTHU-LOU

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *Louis Kaminski*
Occupation: *Plumber*
Marital Status: *Married*
Known Relatives: *Elaine Kaminski (wife), Louise Kaminski (daughter)*
Group Affiliation: *The Legion of Evil*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: *Sherlock Frankenstein and the Legion of Evil #2*
Height: *5'10"* ***Weight:*** *333 lbs.*
Eyes: *Green* ***Hair:*** *Green Tentacles*

HISTORY
Not to be mistaken for the Cthu-Lou of the 1970s, Louis Kaminski was a humble plumber before he was summoned down into the Spiral City sewers. He was greeted by a talking, green-eyed rat and a giant, floating squid simply referred to as "the Great One." The rat explained that the Great One was in need of a new emissary on Earth. A new Lou was needed to become the Many-Angled One's Cthu-Lou, and that Lou was Louis Kaminski. Kaminski attempted to escape the Dark Lord's green tentacles but was promptly captured and swallowed whole. He returned home gaseous, covered in green ooze, and speaking in strange tongues. Suddenly, Kaminski even began sprouting tentacles of his very own. He transformed into a humanoid squid—the new Cthu-Lou.

Kaminski unwillingly began a life of villainy as Cthu-Lou and begrudgingly did the Dark Lord's evil bidding on Earth. While he avoided hurting civilians, Cthu-Lou faced off against Black Hammer and many other heroes across his villainous years. With his heart simply not in the villainy game, however, Kaminski retired before the first Cataclysm, which spared him of that commotion.

Kaminski has since returned his focus to his once-illustrious plumbing career. Most people, however, don't seem to be interested in hiring the Dark Lord's squid emissary to fix their pipes. He spends most of his time with his daughter, Louise (see "Cthu-Louise"), and arguing with his wife, Elaine.

POWERS & WEAPONS
As the Dark Lord's squid emissary on Earth, Cthu-Lou is a humanoid squid. He has eight eyes and many tentacles, each with superhuman strength. He also has superior plumbing skills, and was once featured on a Global Planet listicle titled "10 Plumbers You Have to Hire Before You Die (During the Next Cataclysm)."

CTHU-LOUISE

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *Louise Kaminski*
Occupation: *High School Student*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Louis Kaminski (father), Elaine Kaminski (mother)*
Group Affiliation: *N/A*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: *Sherlock Frankenstein and the Legion of Evil #2*
Height: *5'4"* ***Weight:*** *120 lbs.*
Eyes: *Green* ***Hair:*** *Green Tentacles*

HISTORY
Louise Kaminski is the naturally born child of Louis (see "Cthu-Lou") and Elaine Kaminski. Being the daughter of a former supervillain wasn't easy growing up. Louise often found herself in the crossfires of her parents' strained relationship and was treated poorly by both. She first found hope when she met Lucy Weber (see "Black Hammer II"), while Lucy was interviewing her father during her search for Sherlock Frankenstein (see "Sherlock Frankenstein"). Louise and Lucy quickly bonded, but Lucy left to resume her search for her missing father (see "Black Hammer I"). Louise was all alone, once again.

Years later, Louise was attending elementary school when she was visited in her dreams by her "grandfather"—the Many-Angled One—who had transformed her father into Cthu-Lou. Louise ignored his calls and is trying to be a normal, good girl despite her monstrous appearance. However, her classmates won't allow her to forget what she is: a green, tentacled freak. Louise must make a choice: Will she give into her Many-Angled tendencies and seek vengeance, or will she rise above them and become Spiral City's first tentacled hero? Either way, Louise just hopes to one day be considered "normal."

POWERS & WEAPONS
Louise took on the likeness of her father rather than her mother. This means that she is also green and tentacled but has four eyes instead of eight. She is in the top of her class in every subject and is especially skilled at Mortal Kombat. Louise is also possibly able to summon the almighty wrath and destruction of the Great One through chthonic chants and portals.

GHOST HUNTER

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: *Oberst Klaus von Löwe*
Occupation: *Pilot*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Father (deceased)*
Group Affiliation: *Nazis*
Base of Operations: *Germany*
First Appearance: Black Hammer '45 *#1*
Height: *5′11″* ***Weight:*** *175 lbs.*
Eyes: *Gray* ***Hair:*** *White*

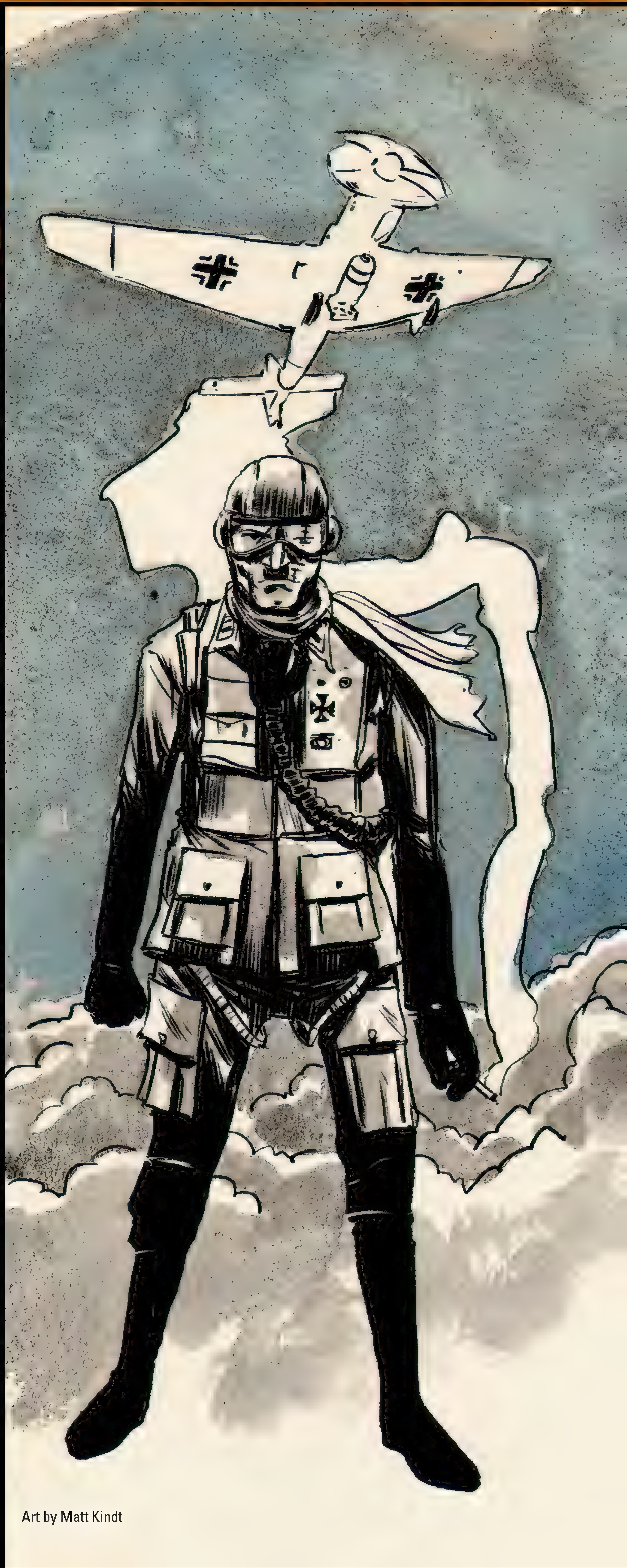
HISTORY

Born into Austrian royalty, von Löwe was the son of an esteemed, record-setting fighter pilot from World War I. Von Löwe followed in his father's footsteps and eventually surpassed him. He became the deadliest pilot in the history of the world—with 850 kills to his name, including Captain Jack Flag, Bulldog, the Atlantic King, and two members of the Black Hammer Squadron (see "Black Hammer Squadron"). Coined der Jägergeist or "the Ghost Hunter," von Löwe became a legend and was feared by many.

He continued to cross paths with the Black Hammer Squadron throughout World War II; however, no moment is more infamous than the battle for the Greenbaums between the Ghost Hunter, the Black Hammer Squadron, and the Russian mecha unit—the Red Tide.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Von Löwe has no known superhuman abilities, but his skills in the cockpit are unparalleled. He also has the innate ability to send a shiver up every spine in any room that he walks into. Besides his Stuka's artillery, von Löwe is never seen without his handy Luger pistols.



Art by Matt Kindt

Art by [illegible]

THE GOLDEN FAMILY

First Appearance: Black Hammer #8

HISTORY

The Golden Family consists of five individuals who have been granted special powers by the ancient wizard Zafram and, by proxy, Golden Gail. Zafram himself wielded his Golden powers for eons while trapped on Earth between worlds. He determined to seek out a worthy heir and fulfill a prophecy that someone pure of heart would one day inherit his powers.

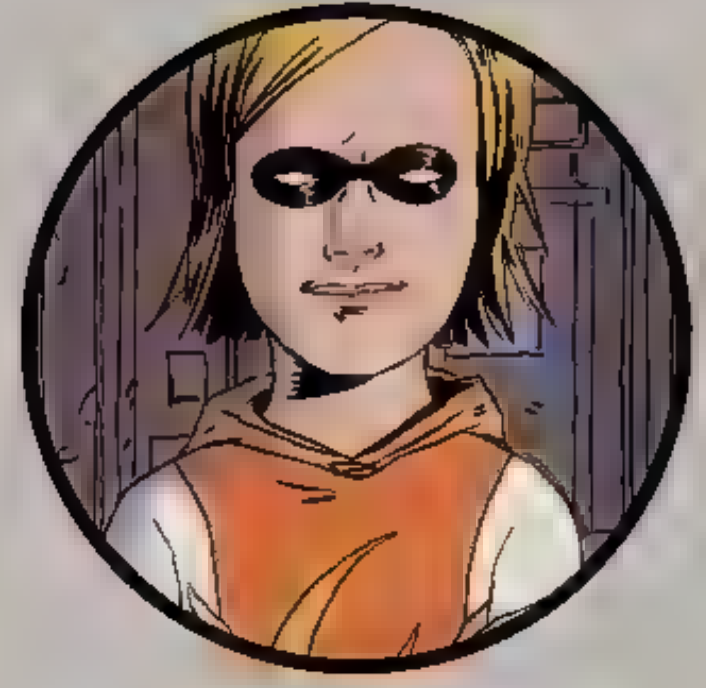
When his death loomed close, Zafram had a mysterious figure hand orphan Gail Gibbons a movie ticket and lure her into a dark theater. There, Zafram struck Gail with mystical lightning and granted her powers, which Gail gained by saying the wizard's name. She transformed into Golden Gail, America's Super Sweetheart (see "Golden Gail"). Zafram had at last found a worthy successor and died shortly thereafter.

The next additions to the Golden Family came when Gail, after fifty years of superheroics, wanted to retire and pass on the Golden torch. She granted a portion of Zafram's powers to Captain Golden, Golden Gary, Golden Gwen, and Golden Goose and formed the Golden Family. Together, the Golden Family protected Spiral City and planet Earth from the threats once faced by Gail alone. Golden Gwen also eventually joined the teen superhero squad, Y-Force.

When Anti-God set his sights on Earth during the first Cataclysm (see "Anti-God"), the Golden Family members were some of the first superhuman responders to arrive. They were easily defeated, murdered, and cast aside. Golden Gail came out of retirement and joined the last remnants of Earth's heroes against Anti-God. She, along with the others, disappeared after Black Hammer's killing blow and hasn't been seen since . . .

MEMBERS

CAPTAIN GOLDEN



GOLDEN GAIL

GOLDEN GARY

GOLDEN GOOSE

GOLDEN GWEN

GOLDEN GAIL

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: *Gail Gibbons*
Occupation: *Retired Superhero*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Unknown (orphaned)*
Group Affiliation: *The Liberty Squadron, The Golden Family*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: Black Hammer #1
Height: *4'1" (5'5" as Gibbons)*
Weight: *62 lbs. (151 lbs. as Gibbons)*
Eyes: *Blue (brown as Gibbons)*
Hair: *Blonde (brown as Gibbons)*

HISTORY

Orphaned as an infant, Gail Gibbons was left to be raised by the Spiral City Orphanage. Growing up within horrible conditions, Gibbons finally experienced enough torment and ran away one stormy night. She hid from the rain at an abandoned theater only to be offered a movie ticket by a mysterious shadowed figure. Upon entering the theater against her better judgement, Gibbons was greeted by an ancient wizard asking her if she was worthy. Confused by the robed man, she asked him who he was. The wizard announced, "I am the wizard Zafram."

"Zafram?" Gibbons asked. Suddenly, magic lightning boomed down and struck her. Gail Gibbons became Golden Gail, America's Super Sweetheart! Overcome by emotions and newfound powers, Gibbons learned that Zafram had been waiting to pass on his powers to someone pure of heart and worthy. Whenever Gibbons spoke Zafram's name, she would transform and become the mighty Golden Gail. With his powers safe inside of Gibbons, Zafram was able to escape his imprisonment on Earth and died.

Using her newfound abilities, Golden Gail fought crime on the streets of Spiral City, while balancing her life as a student. She joined the Liberty Squadron (see "Liberty Squadron") in their battle against the Axis during World War II and continued to fight her archnemesis, Sherlock Frankenstein (see "Sherlock Frankenstein"), throughout her years in superheroics.

Even though Gail Gibbons aged into a mature woman, whenever she spoke the name of Zafram, she would return to the child form of Golden Gail. Aging and wanting to retire, Gibbons eventually bestowed a portion of Zafram's great powers to four other individuals and formed the Golden Family (see "Golden Family"). With a team of Golden heroes protecting Spiral City and Earth, Gibbons was finally able to retire and pursue a romance with a reformed Sherlock Frankenstein.

During the first Cataclysm, the Golden Family was murdered and Golden Gail joined the remaining Earth heroes in the battle against Anti-God (see "Anti-God")—only to mysteriously disappear alongside the other heroes during his dizzying defeat . . .

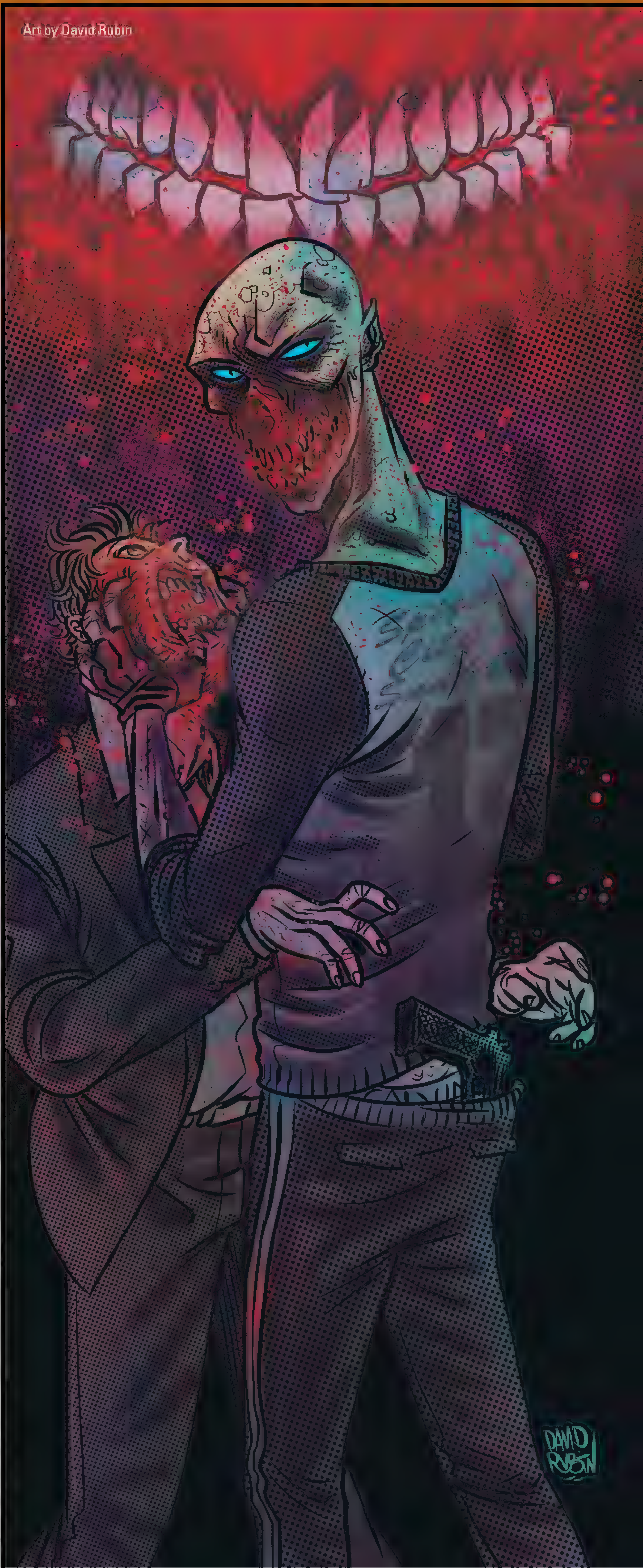
POWERS & WEAPONS

When Gail Gibbons speaks the name of the ancient wizard Zafram, she is transformed by a bolt of magical lightning into Golden Gail—a ten-year-old girl endowed with super strength, speed, invulnerability, and flight. She is also a gifted gymnast and hand-to-hand fighter. Saying the magic word again changes her back to Gail Gibbons.

Art by [illegible]

GRIMJIM

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *Unknown*
Occupation: *Crime Boss*
Marital Status: *Unknown*
Known Relatives: *Unknown*
Group Affiliation: *N/A*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: *Sherlock Frankenstein and the Legion of Evil #1*
Height: *6'5"* ***Weight:*** *189 lbs.*
Eyes: *Red* ***Hair:*** *Bald*



Art by David Rubin

HISTORY

Not much is known about the gruesome Grimjim. He is seemingly immortal and has been active in Spiral City for at least one hundred years. He is also in a constant state of evolution, as he reinvents himself with each new decade. As the years pass, Grimjim only seems to get grimmer and grimmer. He is a sadist through and through.

Grimjim has murdered thousands of people (and animals and plants too!) over his wretched life, and—were he not unkillable—he surely would have been executed for his crimes long ago. No one knows where he came from, what created him, or why his mind is warped so terribly. Although, some believe Grimjim to be the devil himself . . .

POWERS & WEAPONS

Grimjim is seemingly immortal and unkillable. He quickly heals and regenerates from even the most serious of injuries. Grimjim also has super senses that predominantly grant him heightened hearing and sight. He is usually seen alongside his crew of skull-wearing cronies and wielding his signature handguns.

THE HORSELESS RIDER

Art by Ray Fawkes

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *Jacob Tex*
Occupation: *Gambler, Gunslinger*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *None*
Group Affiliation: *The Liberty Squadron*
Base of Operations: *The Wild West*
First Appearance: Sherlock Frankenstein and the Legion of Evil *#4*
Height: *6'2"* ***Weight:*** *185 lbs.*
Eyes: *White* ***Hair:*** *White*

HISTORY

After murdering and cheating his way across the Old West, gambler Jacob Tex was eventually killed in a drunken saloon brawl. However, his life wasn't over yet, and his death had just begun. God enlisted Tex to exact vengeance on the evil men of the Wild West. He became the haunting "Specter of the Prairies," the Horseless Rider.

In cases where a supernatural threat is involved, the Horseless Rider has been known to appear in the present day, particularly in Spiral City, where he shares an uneasy alliance with many modern superheroes.

POWERS & WEAPONS

The Horseless Rider's abilities defy all attempts at classification. He seems to be able to appear and vanish at will. At times he has shown the ability to control supernatural energies. He can become intangible and is impervious to harm. He often uses his mystical six-shooters to exact vengeance.

JACK SABBATH

Art by Tyler Crook

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *N/A*
Occupation: *Ghostly Guide*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Rusty Sabbath (father)*
Goldie Sabbath (mother)
Group Affiliation: *The Unbelievable Unteens*
Base of Operations: *The Cabin of Horrors*
First Appearance: Black Hammer: Age of Doom *#2*
Height: *5'9"* ***Weight:*** *123 lbs.*
Eyes: *White* ***Hair:*** *Decomposed*

HISTORY

Jack Sabbath grew up in Spiral City. His father was a postman and his mother a nurse. Even as a baby, strange things tended to happen around Jack, but his parents were too frightened to tell anyone. As Jack grew into adolescence, the strange phenomena that followed him grew more extreme, and they could no longer ignore the fact that young Jack was different. Jack's parents were very religious people, and they worried that their son may be some sort of demon. The truth was that Jack was born with superhuman abilities that destined him for both greatness and tragedy (see "The Unbelievable Unteens") . . .

Years later, after his death, Jack Sabbath is condemned to act as a ghostly guide to the recently deceased. He has been roaming the interconnected supernatural realms of the afterlife for three decades. But Jack only wants one thing: to be alive again.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Jack was born with a superhuman ability that allows him to channel and harness paranormal energies from the ethereal planes. This grants him magical talents that involve chaos- and reality-warping abilities. He is also able to open portals and travel across different supernatural realms.

THE LIBERTY SQUADRON

First Appearance: Sherlock Frankenstein and the Legion of Evil *#4*

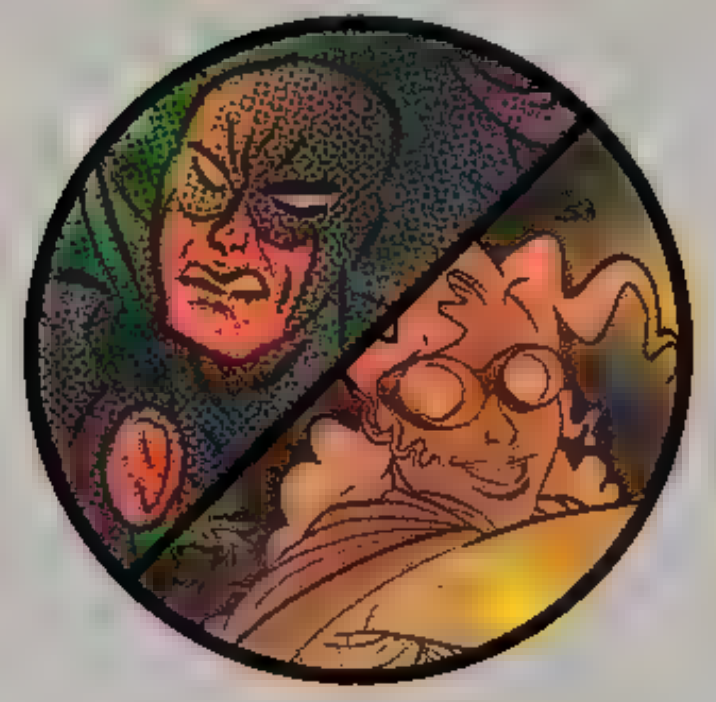
HISTORY

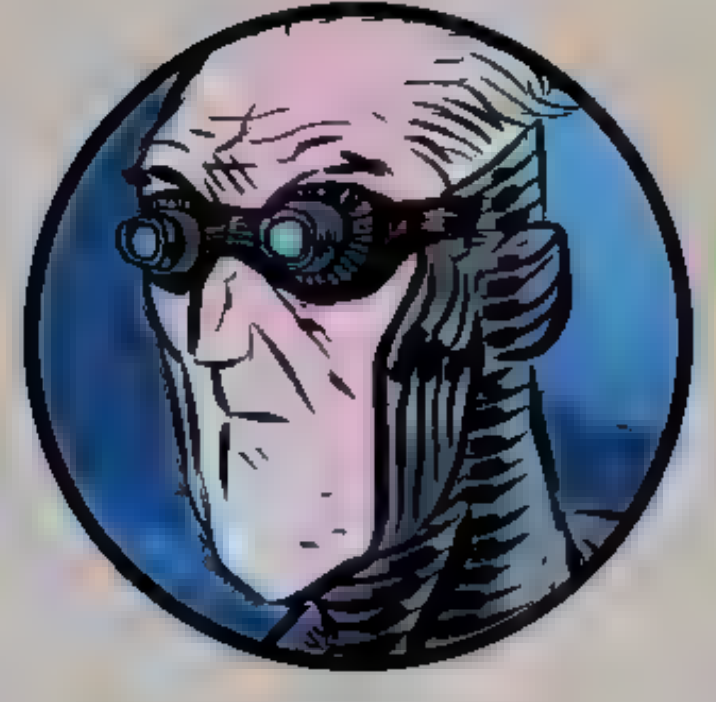
The Liberty Squadron is the oldest organization of superheroes in history and also one of the greatest. As war broke out across Europe, Spiral City's heroes came together to debate the actions necessary. Should they join the fight overseas or stay in America and secure their border? A vote commenced to determine the outcome, and it was a draw! However, just then, Dr. Jimmy Robinson arrived on the scene and announced his debut as Doctor Andromeda! Robinson became the deciding vote, and the Liberty Squadron was born! The Squadron took the battle to Europe and faced the Axis head-on. They played a key role during World War II and returned war heroes.

The Liberty Squadron eventually disbanded in the aftermath of the war.

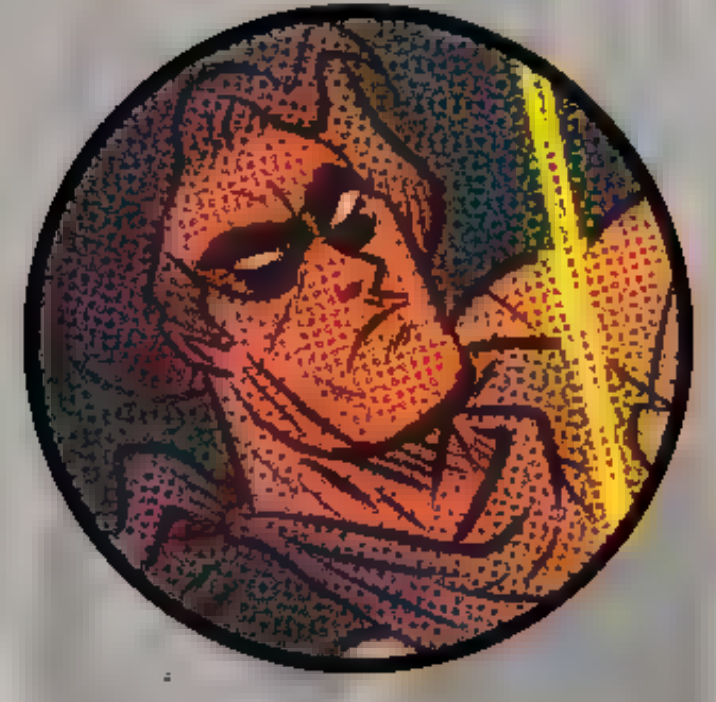
MEMBERS

ABRAHAM SLAM


CAPTAIN NIGHT & DR. DAY


DOCTOR ANDROMEDA

GOLDEN GAIL


THE HORSELESS RIDER

WINGMAN

Art by Rich Tommaso

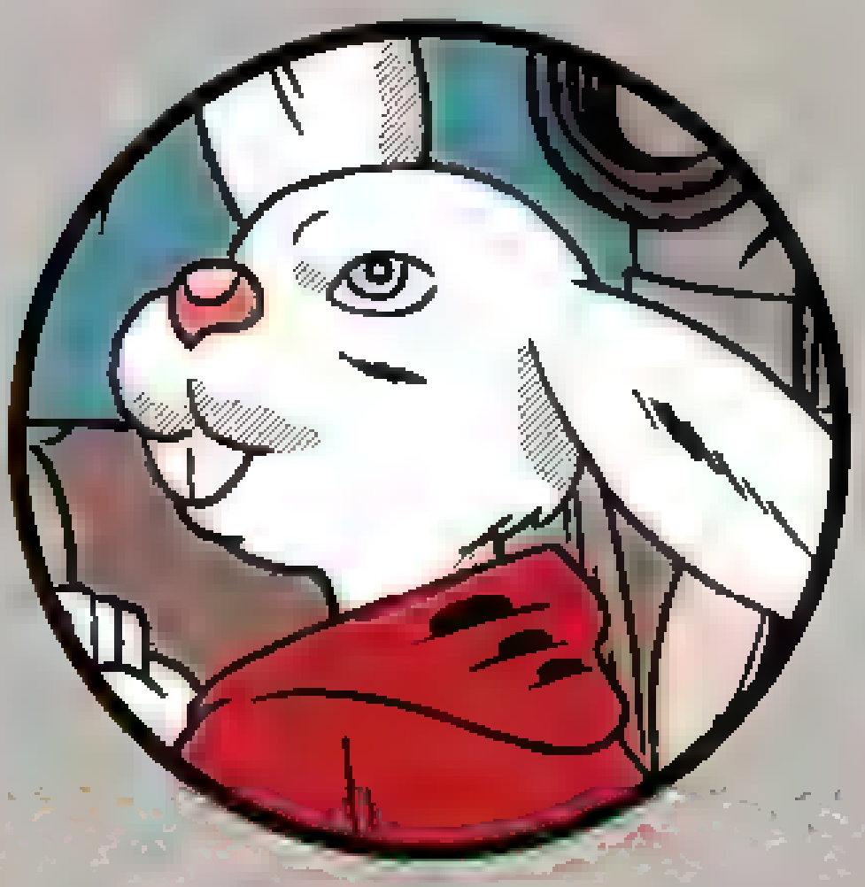
LIMBO LAND

First Appearance: Black Hammer: Age of Doom *#6*

HISTORY

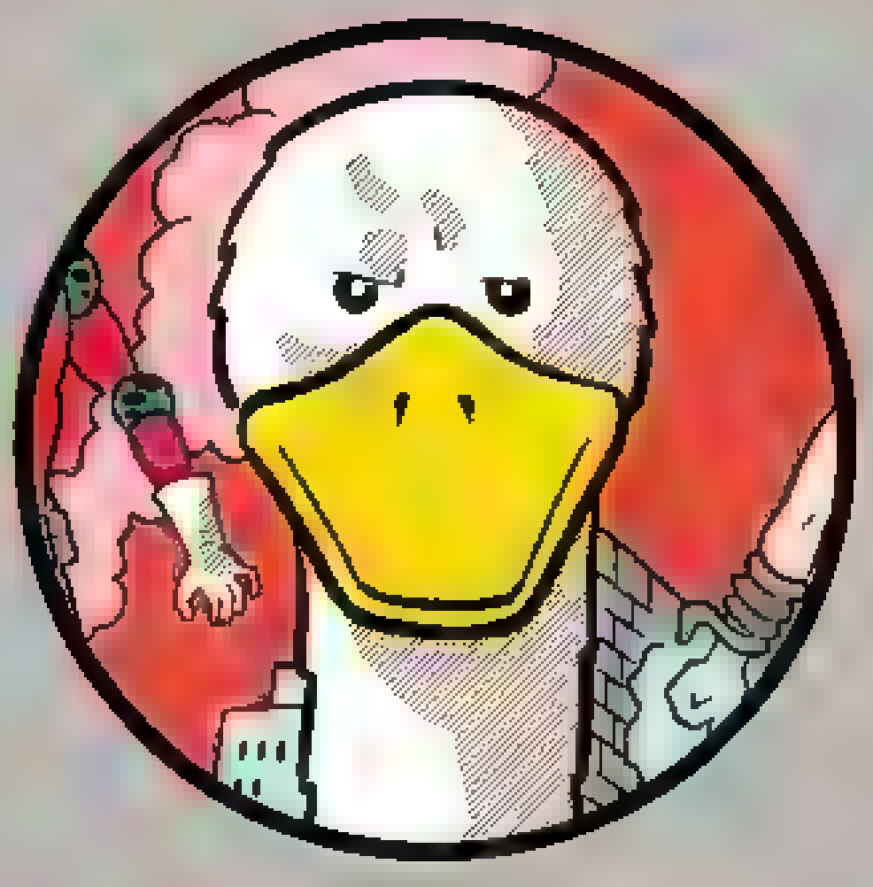
Limbo Land is filled with the unrealized characters from unfinished stories that the Creator has either forgotten about or disposed of. This is a dimension constantly shifting and changing shape, seemingly at random but much more likely due to the nefarious whims of some scatterbrain despot. It's hard to make it to the page. It's even harder to make it to a page that matters. Only Golden Goose has ever managed to slip through the cracks of the Creator's subconscious and make it into three official panels and one variant cover!

MEMBERS



BARBALI-BUNNY

BURT LANCELOT

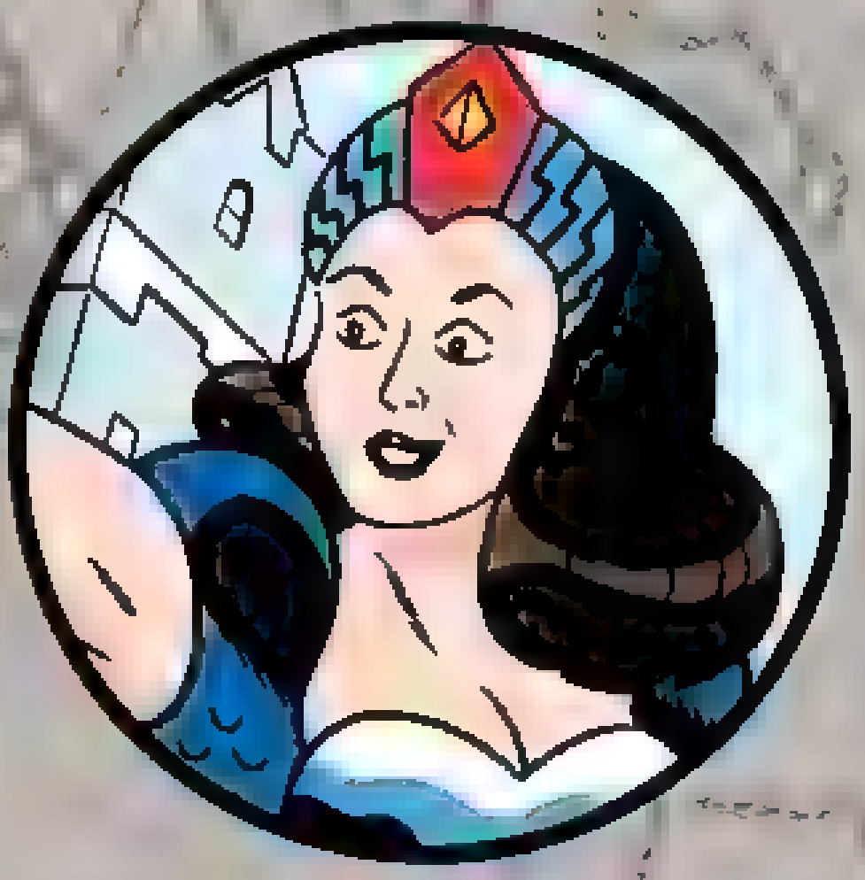


GOLDEN GOOSE

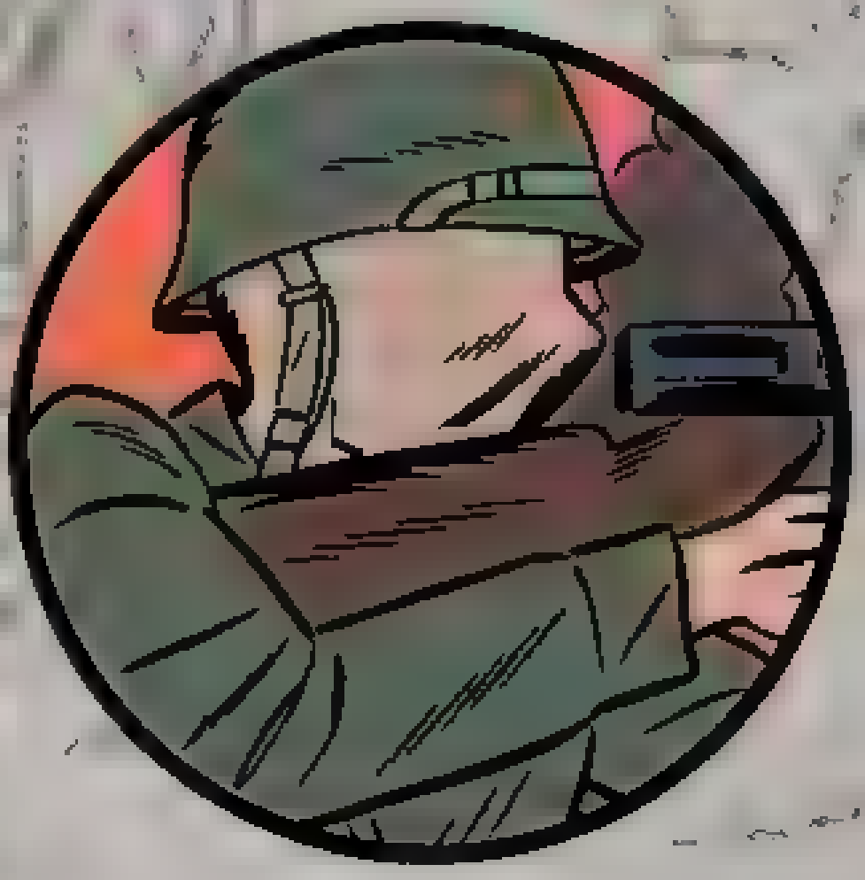
HAM SLAMWICH

INSPECTOR INSECTOR

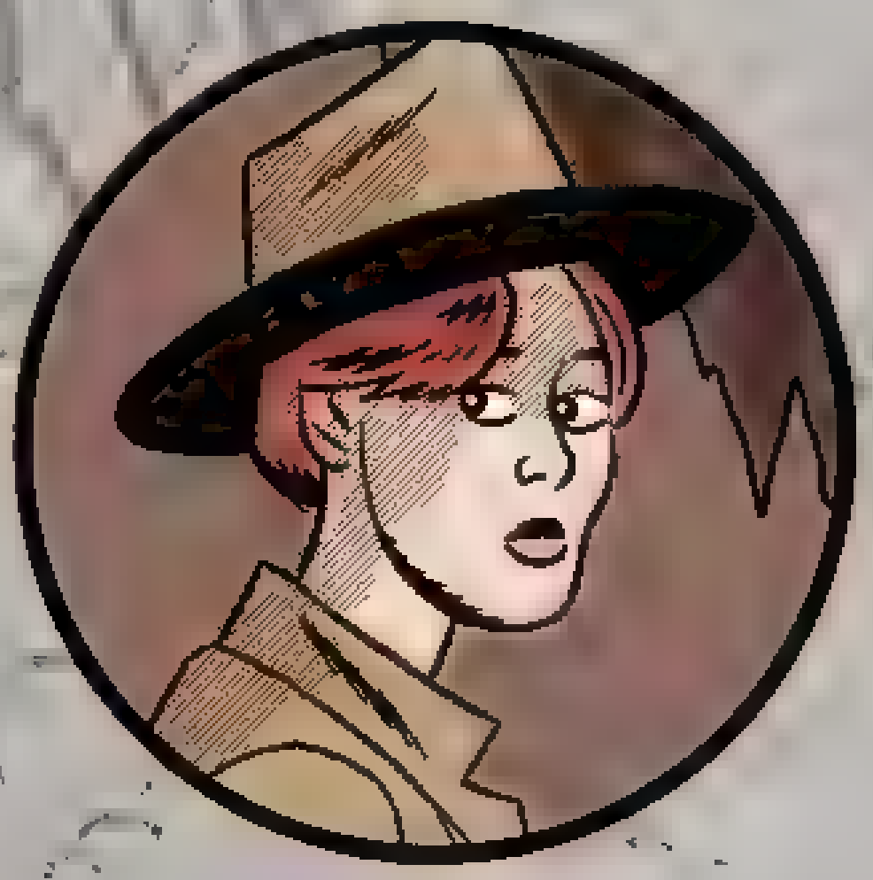
MISTER GRIZZLY



MS. MOONBEAM



SOLDIER X



STELLA STEELE

LONNIE JAMES

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *N/A*
Occupation: *Bartender*
Marital Status: *Unknown*
Known Relatives: *Unknown*
Group Affiliation: *N/A*
Base of Operations: *The Anteroom*
First Appearance: Black Hammer: Age of Doom *#1*
Height: *6'5"* ***Weight:*** *247 lbs.*
Eyes: *Blue* ***Hair:*** *Bald; Red Beard*

HISTORY

Lonnie James runs the dodgiest pub in existence: the Anteroom. It's a meeting place of sorts for all the misfits and monsters of the omniverse to come together for a couple o' drinks and to rock out **hard**. It's the spot where stories go to wait and pace the dance floor. James runs the joint, keeping the band list moving and the attendees happy—just make sure not to trust the guy. When Lucy Weber (see "Black Hammer II") arrived on his scene, he led her along with false pretenses and then abandoned her in Hell. So, yeah, he's a grade-A bastard.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Talking. It's what he does best.

Art by Ray Fawkes

MADAME DRAGONFLY

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *Unknown*
Notable Aliases: *Madame Butterfly*
Occupation: *Guardian of the Cabin of Horrors*
Marital Status: *Widowed*
Known Relatives: *Jacob (son, deceased)*
Group Affiliation: *None*
Base of Operations: *The Cabin of Horrors*
First Appearance: *Black Hammer #1*
Height: *5'9"* ***Weight:*** *126 lbs.*
Eyes: *Green* ***Hair:*** *Black*

HISTORY

There once was a cabin in the woods not too far off from a wayward town. This was a cabin that lied in wait for lost souls and searching travelers. Its windows appeared lit and welcoming as if to coax those troubled spirits toward its horrific womb . . . until they approached and knocked. The door would creak open and darkness would swiftly fall. The frightened travelers would then be greeted by a winged witch with questions—what do you want or what do you need—and even more answers. This was Madame Dragonfly. She offered great things and expected even greater things in return. Her cabin housed many doors with many horrors behind them, and they should never be opened at any time. The travelers' immortal souls depended on it.

Not much was known about Madame Dragonfly's origins, although it was rumored that she was once an inhabitant of that wayward town not too far off. She too sought help from a winged witch. She, too, was made an offer in exchange for a granted wish. She, too, fell victim to a terrible curse. Dragonfly appeared to be a guardian of many horrors, but whether she was keeping those horrors at bay or simply awaiting her chance to unleash them is still unknown.

But, alas, decades seemed to pass and Madame Dragonfly remained. In her later years, she was rumored to have been seen with a swamp monster in a deranged romance of sorts. Those sightings and rumors were just that, however, and it was not known whether her heart was even capable of something as innately human as love. Madame Dragonfly was the guardian of many horrors, the biggest horrors being the ones she hid within herself.

She was seen in battle aiding the heroes of Earth against Anti-God (see "Anti-God") during the first Cataclysm. She too disappeared and is yet to be found. Her cabin mysteriously vanished alongside her . . .

One hundred years in the future, Madame Dragonfly—now calling herself Madame Butterfly—lives blissfully on Spiral Swamp with a new swamp sweetheart. However, this doesn't last long as she is called back into action by the Quantum League (see "The Quantum League").

POWERS & WEAPONS

Madame Dragonfly's abilities are intrinsically linked to her Cabin of Horrors. She can channel the dark energies contained within it, summoning the beings and powers of a hundred dimensions. This also grants her manipulation of the mystic arts, often in the form of incredibly powerful illusions. She is also in possession of a number of occult artifacts which lend her a variety of magical abilities.

Art by Lucy Sullivan

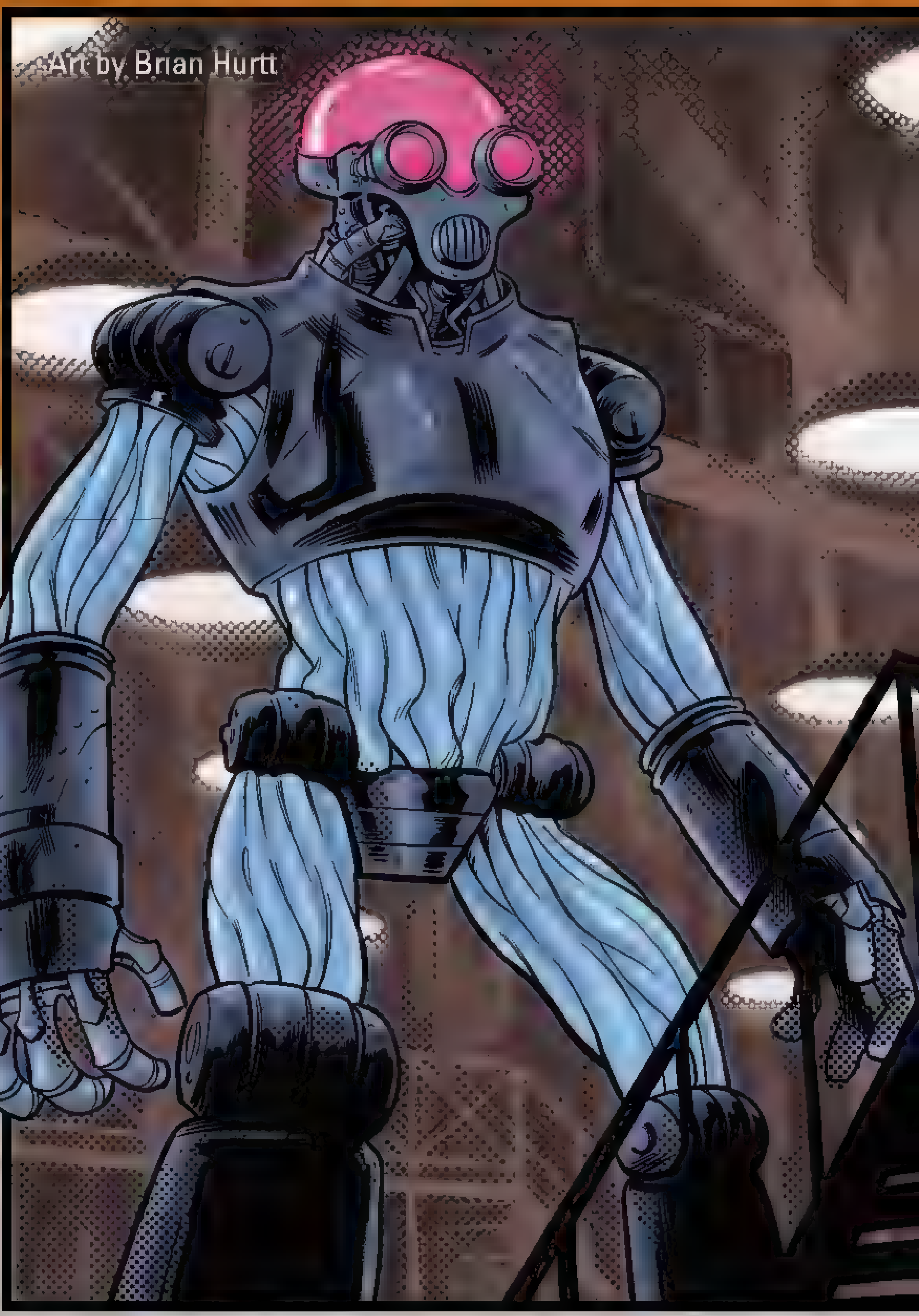
MECTOPLASM

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *Eugene Tremblay*
Occupation: *Unwilling Criminal*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Parents (deceased)*
Group Affiliation: *None*
Base of Operations: *Spiral Asylum*
First Appearance: Sherlock Frankenstein and the Legion of Evil #1
Height: *30'* ***Weight:*** *20 tons*
Eyes: *Pink* ***Hair:*** *None*

HISTORY
Little is known about Eugene Tremblay's past, but what is known is that he was only a child when he died in a freak accident. He was a small boy taken away from his parents too soon. Sherlock Frankenstein (see "Sherlock Frankenstein"), during his days of villainy, captured the boy's ghost and imprisoned it in an indestructible metal body, transferring his soul and consciousness into a powerful mechanical goliath.

Frankenstein then controlled Tremblay's metallic body for his own nefarious agenda. He brought the boy back from death and into a life of pain and forced servitude. Mectoplasm soon became a chief foe for Black Hammer, Madame Dragonfly, and Abraham Slam—with none of them knowing his true history. Tremblay wanted nothing to do with evil, for he was just an innocent child. He eventually broke free of Frankenstein's control and ran. He tried to escape his past and refused future offers of villainy, but blood was already on his hands. Tremblay was captured and imprisoned for the crimes he was forced to commit. He spends his days in a prison cell at Spiral Asylum.

POWERS & WEAPONS
Mectoplasm's body is nearly indestructible and is equipped with numerous weapons. Eugene's favorite device is the teddy launcher, but Sherlock rarely ever allowed him to use that one. He can also fire blasts of burning ectoplasm from his gauntlets.


Art by Brian Hurtt

METAL MINOTAUR

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *N. Parker*
Occupation: *Engineer, Inventor*
Marital Status: *Married*
Known Relatives: *Genevieve Goupil (wife)*
Group Affiliation: *N/A*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: Sherlock Frankenstein and the Legion of Evil #3
Height: *10'* ***Weight:*** *2.5 tons*
Eyes: *Brown* ***Hair:*** *Gray (formerly black)*

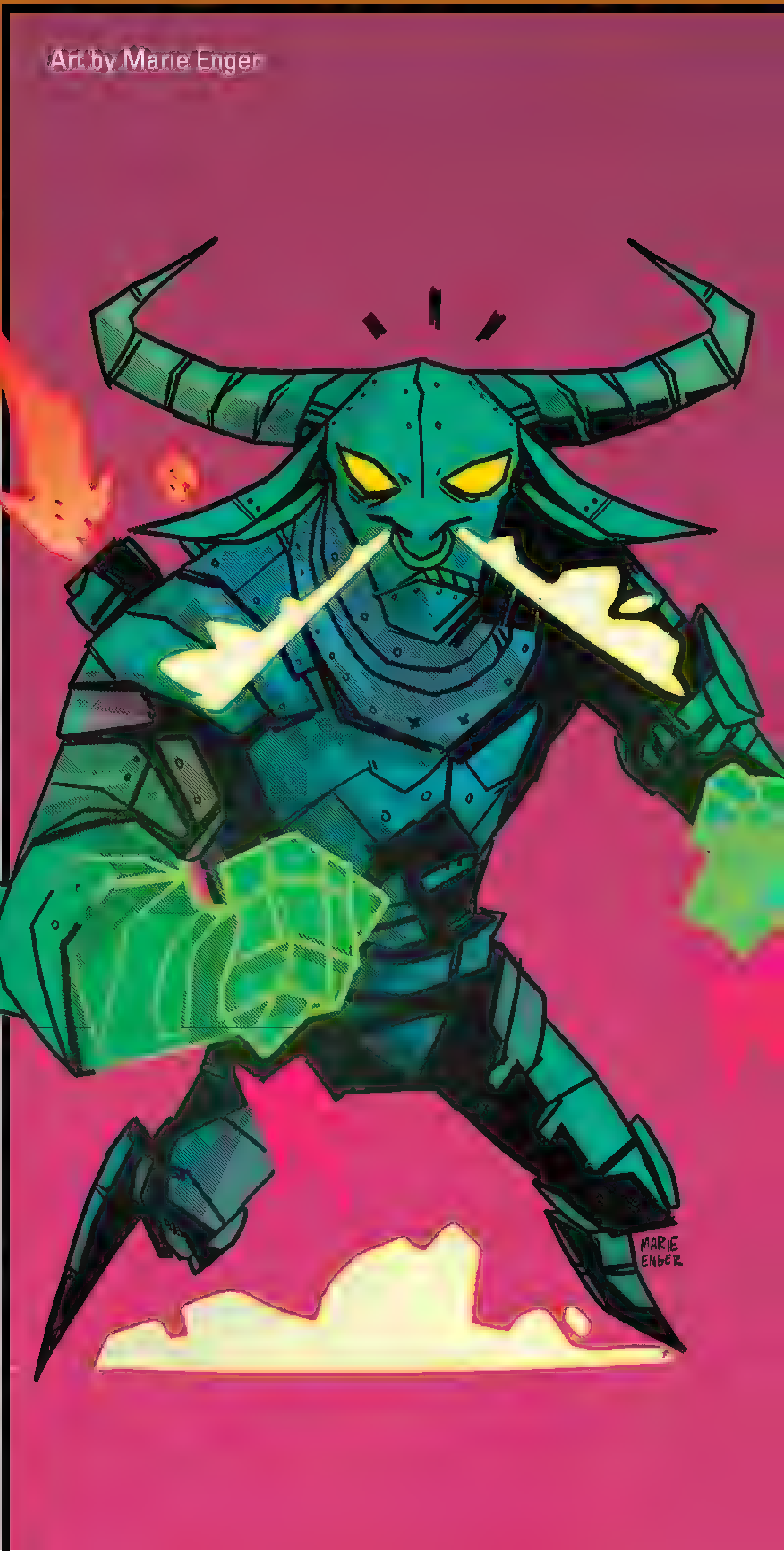
HISTORY
N. Parker was an incredibly gifted engineer and mechanic. She did the obvious and used these talents to build a massive suit of mythical battle armor. Parker soon began an illustrious career as the Metal Minotaur and became one of Black Hammer's greatest foes (see "Black Hammer I"). With each defeat, Parker improved her armor until she built her most powerful one yet. This armor acted like an exoskeleton by directly connecting to her spine, but hubris got the better of this brilliant engineer. She rushed her creation and never accounted for the shifts of mass the exoskeleton would take! When she attempted to walk in the armor, it snapped her back like a toothpick.

Black Hammer quickly rescued Parker from her bone-crushing Cretan cage and transported her to New World. Starlok (see "Starlok & the Lightriders") used his otherworldly magic and medicine to heal her as much as he could. While she would never walk again, Parker survived the experience and was able to bond with her former enemy, Black Hammer.

When Anti-God arrived on Earth during the first Cataclysm (see "Anti-God"), Parker responded to a call from Sherlock Frankenstein (see "Sherlock Frankenstein"). She donned her Metal Minotaur armor once more with the help of Manaconda and had plans to help Spiral City's heroes in their battle against Anti-God. However, before any of the villains could join the fight, the heroes disappeared in a flash of light after Anti-God's defeat.

Parker now lives in a long-term care facility on the East End of Spiral City, where she spends her time reading Motor magazine, playing Ms. Pac-Man, and chain-smoking.

POWERS & WEAPONS
The Metal Minotaur is a formidable achievement in engineering. Linked directly to Parker's brain, the powered suit operates in accordance with her movements. It grants superhuman strength and durability and an array of weaponry—including, but not limited to: sonic cannons, flamethrowers, buzz saws, quake hooves, and a laser bullwhip.


Art by Marie Enger

Art by Christian Ward

THE PARA-ZONE

First Appearance: Black Hammer *#5*

HISTORY

A place beyond places. A time beyond time. The Para-zone lies between dimensions, and only a few have managed to breach its membrane. Colonel Weird (see "Colonel Weird") is the only man to have entered the realm and survived. He gained incredible abilities and insight, but it was all at the expense of his mind. He now drifts between his reality and the Para-zone—lost within the curves and angles of its design.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Robinson, the costumed hero Doctor Andromeda, never visited the Para-zone but was able to invent a Para-Gauntlet that tapped into its para-radiation. He harnesses it as a weapon to fight evil across the universe with his squad of intergalactic para-wand wielders: the Star Sheriff Squadron.

The Para-zone is a dimension that sits just beyond ours. It is always watching. It is always knowing. If you ever happen to catch sight of one of its many eyes, do not stare and don't you dare make contact . . . You never know if it will take a liking to you. You never know if it will decide to pull you deep within its madness too . . .

Art by Matt Kindt

THE PULP AGE

First Appearance: Sherlock Frankenstein and the Legion of Evil #4

HISTORY

The 1930s saw the dawn of the superheroes. As Sherlock Frankenstein (see "Sherlock Frankenstein") set up shop in Spiral City as the world's first super villain, a trinity of heroic individuals rose up to meet him.

The first of these heroes was the adventurer, detective, researcher, physician, inventor, veterinarian, scientist, industrialist, master of disguise, and, as was eventually revealed, world-renowned violist: Doctor Nathan Steele. Raised by his Tibetan mother and a team of rogue international scientists assembled by his dead father, Steele was trained from birth through a series of rigorous experiments. This resulted in Steele acquiring peak human strength and agility, mastery of all martial arts, a brilliant scientific mind, and a "just okay" understanding of the occult. Steele eventually found himself returning to his father's homeland, America, where he became known as Doc Steele. He spent his days thwarting evildoers, rehabilitating criminals, and skiing the Himalayas.

Who sees what hate warps the minds of humankind? The Crimson Fist sees! Soon after Doc Steele's emergence, FBI agent Anthony Carcone went rogue and abandoned Hoover's bureau. He decided to take the war against organized crime into his own hands and became the first vigilante known as the Crimson Fist. The horror of crime taints the American dream! Crime cannot hide . . . The Crimson Fist sees!

Daughter to Congolese survivors escaping the tyranny of colonial rule, Tazara was snatched from her parents' cold, dead fingers after their pursuers cornered them deep within the Congo Basin. What these pursuers didn't realize, however, is that the jungle is always watching. A giant leopard sprang from the bushes and slashed their throats, rescuing Tazara and deciding to raise her as her own. Years passed and Tazara became revered as a goddess of the jungle—a warrior unlike any the world had ever known. She stands up for the oppressed and against those who seek to do them harm. In 1932 she eventually found herself in a foreign land . . . Spiral City!

MEMBERS

CRIMSON FIST

DOC STEELE

TAZARA

Art by Wilfredo Torres
with Dave Stewart

THE QUANTUM LEAGUE

First Appearance: *"The Quantum Age" from* Free Comic Book Day 2018

HISTORY

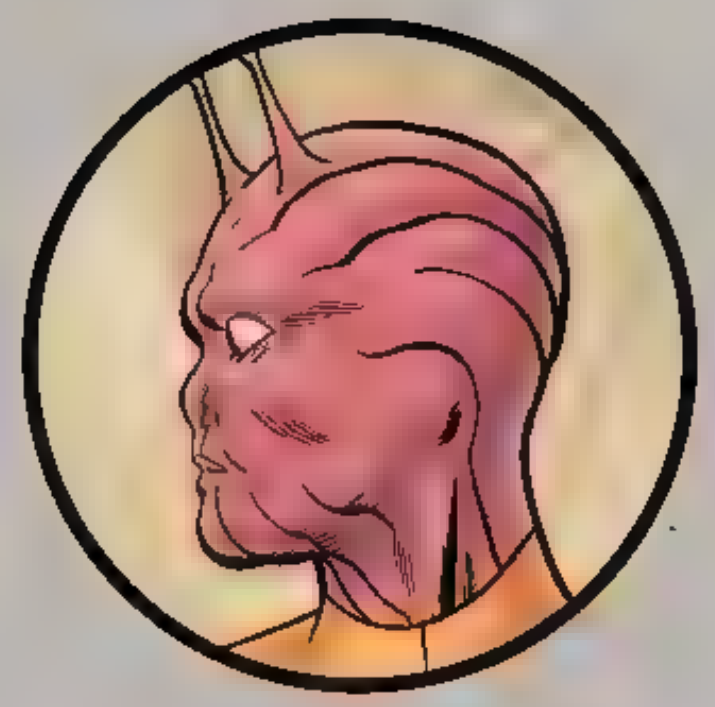
One hundred years in the future, the Quantum League acts as the first line of defense in the known universe. Archive, Modula, and Gravitus initially teamed up in response to a Charnian terrorist attack during the first intergalactic gravity-ball tournament. As they stood victorious before a cheering crowd, the trio decided it was necessary to form an interplanetary league of the greatest super beings in existence. Together, they brought peace to the galaxies that had hitherto never been achieved before, and they accomplished it together. Archive acted as the main leader and soon began an illicit affair with Hammer Lass—a descendant of Black Hammer (see "Black Hammer I & II"). However, Archive's commitment to his lover and team was challenged when a Martian horde arrived on Earth and the planet appeared doomed. In the aftermath of this cataclysmic event, the Quantum League disbanded, never to be formed again.

Until years later, a Martian codenamed Barbaliteen sought to reassemble the Quantum League in order to save the universe once more . . .

MEMBERS

ANTLER BOY

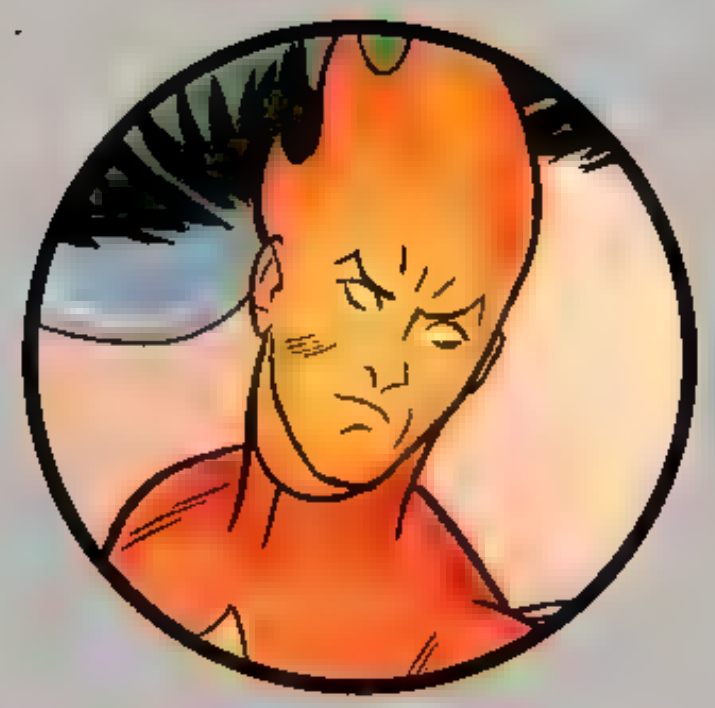
ARCHIVE



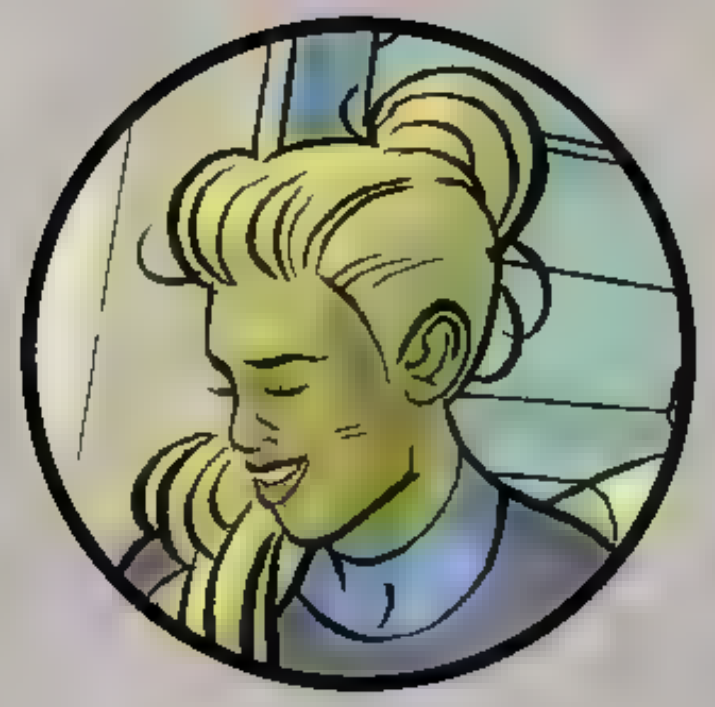
BARBALITEEN

DOPPLER DIVA

ERB



FIREBALL



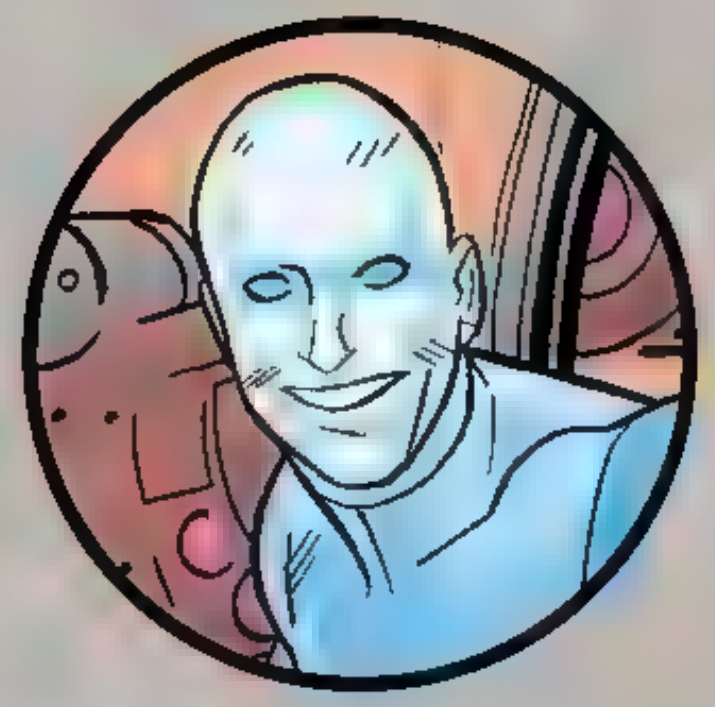
GLUE GIRL

GOLIATHAN

GRAVITUS

HAMMER LASS

HORNET GIRL



ICE BOY

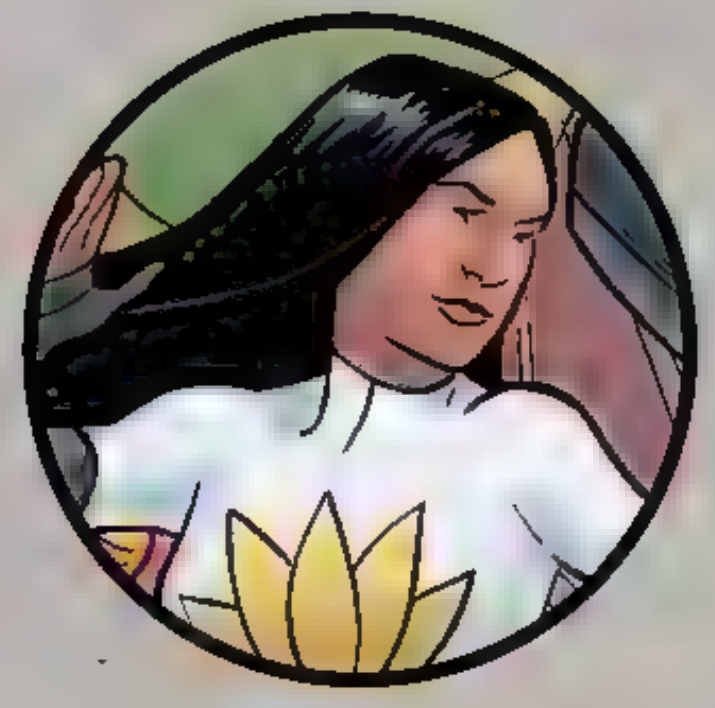
LASAR PHASAR

MECHANOS

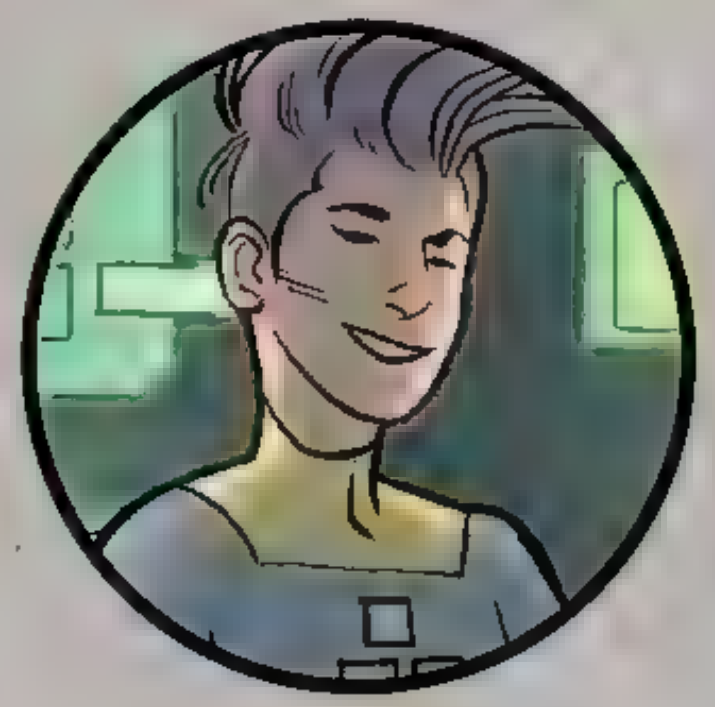
MODULA

MONSTER BOY

STORMA



STRATUM



TRIONIC

UNKNOWN BOY

WARILLA

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN

PERSONAL DATA

Full Name: *Sherlock Frankenstein*
Occupation: *CEO of Frankenlock Worldwide*
Marital Status: *Widowed*
Known Relatives: *Unknown*
Group Affiliation: *N/A*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City Asylum*
First Appearance: Black Hammer *#2*
Height: *6'3"* ***Weight:*** *170 lbs.*
Eyes: *Red* ***Hair:*** *Bald*

Art by David Rubin

HISTORY

In 1893, a man named Sherlock Frankenstein lay dying in a hospital bed. Left to rot in the care of a kindred nurse, Frankenstein determined to take his life and recovery into his own hands. Through the use of his brilliant intellect, Frankenstein invented a series of machines that cured his disease and granted him immortality. Reborn and undead with an ingenious mind, Sherlock turned his sights on bettering the world around him through the use of his inventions. What began was an illustrious career as Victorian London's—and possibly the world's—first superhero. He solved the crimes and thwarted the evildoers that no one else could. He became a legend.

Even after he achieved notoriety, Frankenstein never forgot the one person that ever showed him kindness. He returned to the nurse that once cared for him and soon the two were wed. Frankenstein's unbeating heart found love that day. Sadly, this newfound bliss and jubilation for life was not to last. Frankenstein's wife fell ill to the same disease that had ailed him. When he attempted to save his bride with the same machines that granted him immortality, they failed, and she died. Heartbroken and bitter toward a world that only caused him pain, Frankenstein abandoned his superhero career and pursued villainy instead. However, London held too many painful memories. Frankenstein left for the New World, the United States of America, and set his villainous gaze upon Spiral City.

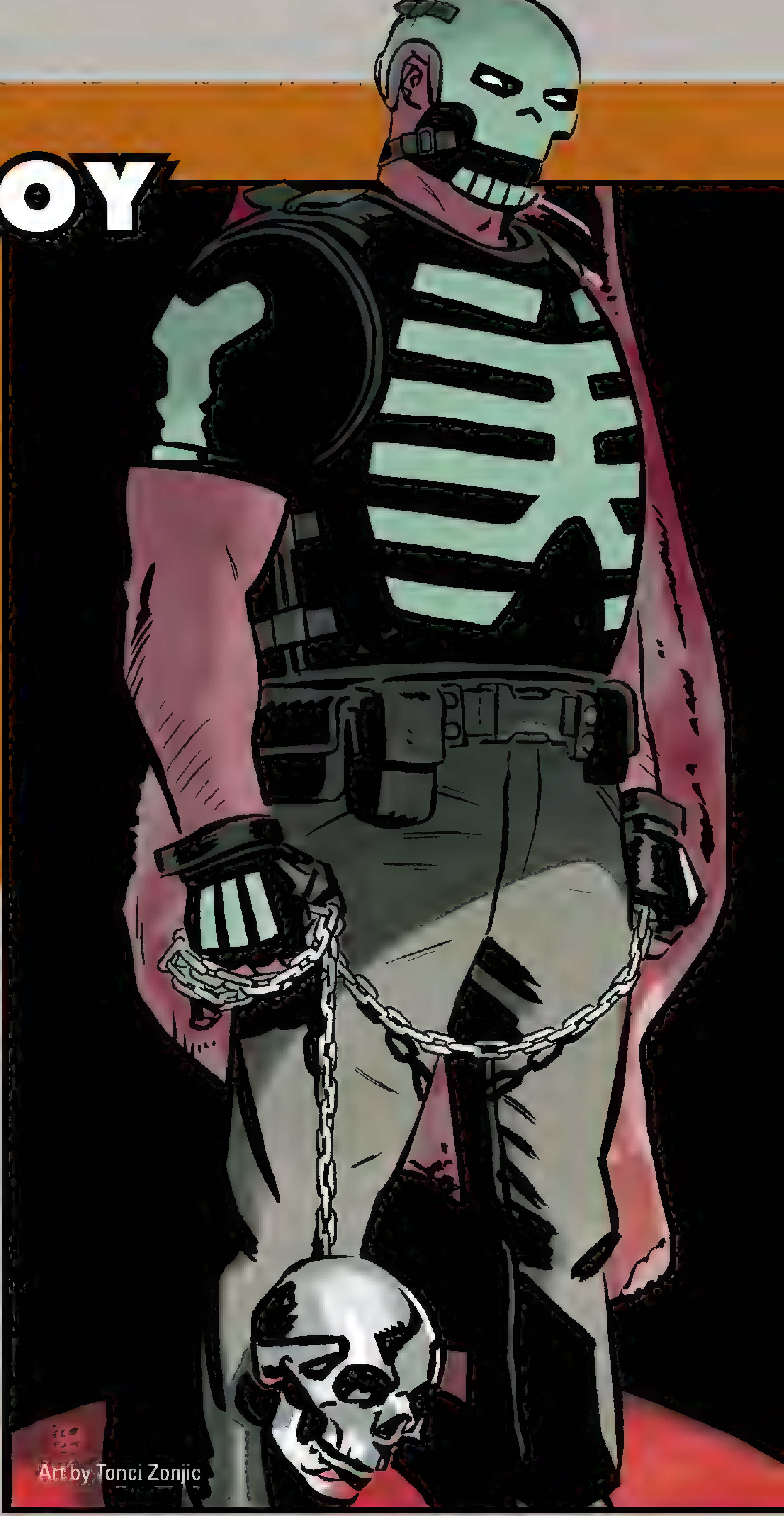
There he has reigned as the supreme supervillain, battling heroes from the Pulp Age (see "The Pulp Age") to the modern age. His archnemesis is Golden Gail (see "Golden Gail"); however, there may be more to their relationship than it appears! He eventually retired from villainy and founded Frankenlock Worldwide—a global leader in medicinal research and clean, renewable energy. Frankenstein rebranded once again. He was now the world's premiere, international philanthropist.

He supposedly now spends his days locked in Spiral Asylum (see "Spiral Asylum"), where Lucy Weber (see "Black Hammer II") heads off to find him in search of her missing father . . .

POWERS & WEAPONS

Sherlock Frankenstein is immortal with a super-genius-level intellect. He has a myriad of inventions and weapons that he has created and enlists when necessary. These mostly include giant robots, death rays, and mammoth defrosters.

SKULLDIGGER & SKELETON BOY


Art by Tonci Zonjic

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: *Unknown*
Occupation: *Unknown*
Marital Status: *Unknown*
Known Relatives: *Unknown*
Group Affiliation: *N/A*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: Skulldigger *#1*
Height: *5'10"* ***Weight:*** *234 lbs*
Eyes: *Brown* ***Hair:*** *Brown*

Alter Ego: *Unknown*
Occupation: *Schoolboy*
Known Relatives: *Father (deceased); Mother (deceased)*
Group Affiliation: *N/A*
Base of Operations: *Spiral City*
First Appearance: Skulldigger *#1*
Height: *4'7"* ***Weight:*** *76.5 lbs*
Eyes: *Hazel* ***Hair:*** *Red*

HISTORY

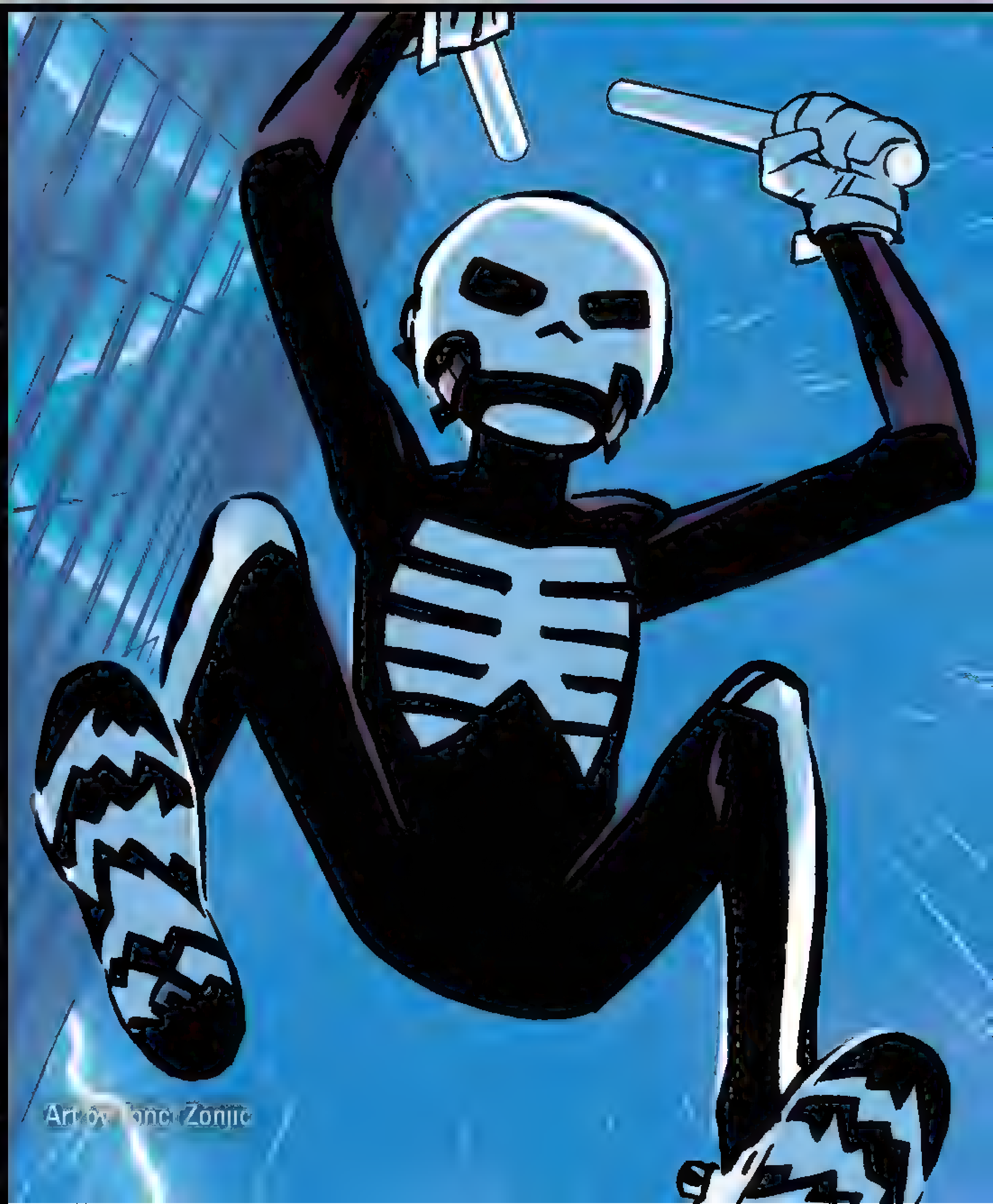
Very little is known about the masked vigilante known as Skulldigger, though there are persistent rumors that he was once Alley Rat, the child sidekick of the second iteration of the Crimson Fist. Whoever he is behind the skull mask, Skulldigger has been waging a brutal war against crime in Spiral City since the mideighties. His murderous ways have been condemned by the Spiral City Police Department and by most other costumed heroes, yet Skulldigger has never been brought to justice himself.

Recently Skulldigger has been seen operating with a sidekick of his own, known as Skeleton Boy.

POWERS & WEAPONS

As far as anyone knows, Skulldigger has no superhuman abilities, but he is a superb hand-to-hand combatant. He never uses firearms, and instead employs a metallic skull on a chain to bludgeon his opponents.

Little is known about Skeleton Boy or his abilities.


Art by Tonci Zonjic

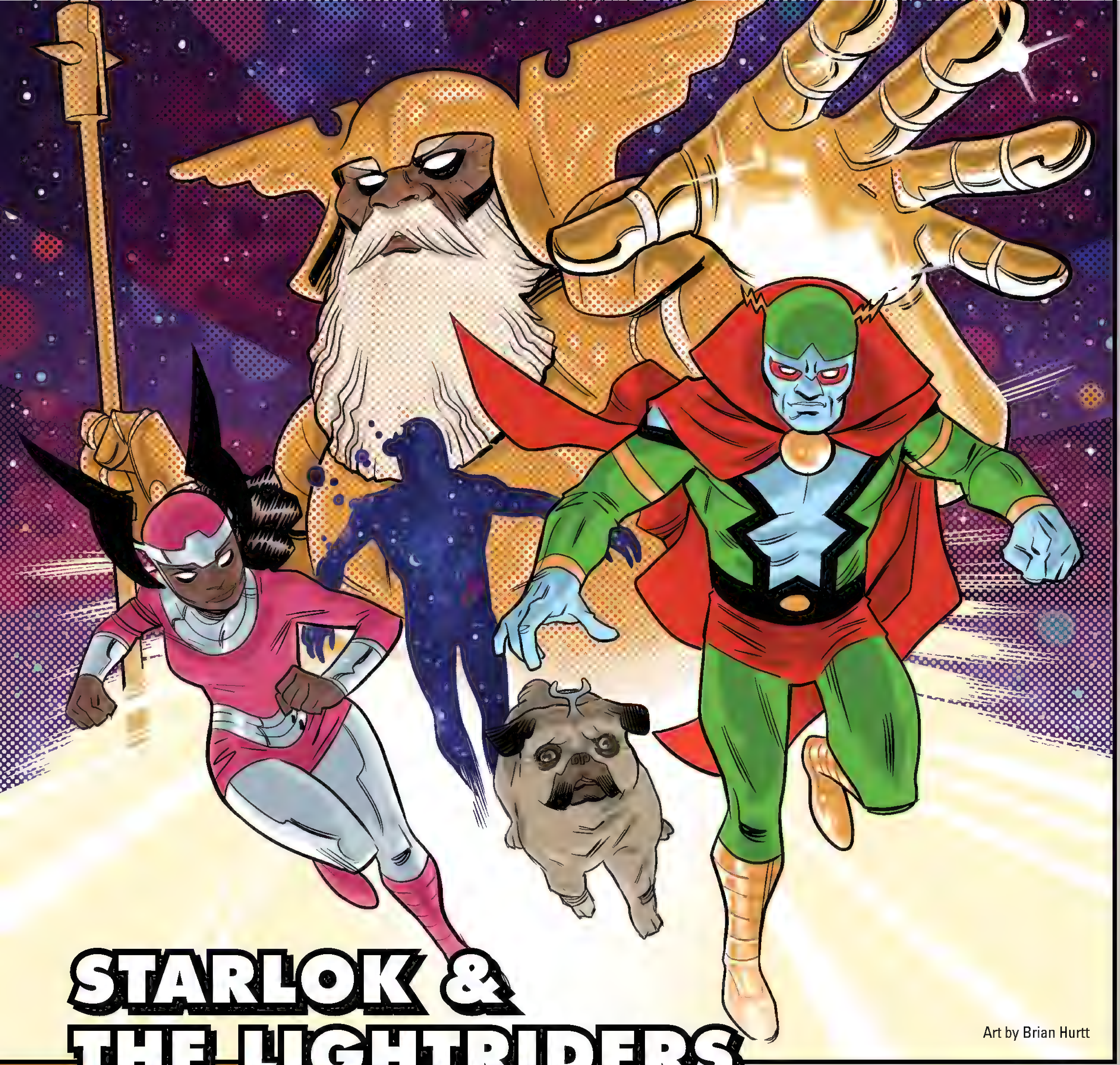
Art by David Rubin

SPIRAL ASYLUM

First Appearance: Sherlock Frankenstein and the Legion of Evil *#1*

HISTORY

Located in Spiral City, Spiral Asylum is the super-security prison for superpowered criminals. It's where the worst of the worst villains get locked away and forgotten about—until they escape and destroy the city's water main system again. (Editor's Note: Somebody has to keep Cthu-Lou in business!) Some of its illustrious prisoners include Sherlock Frankenstein (see "Sherlock Frankenstein"), Mectoplasm (see "Mectoplasm"), Grimjim (see "Grimjim"), Sultrix, Manaconda, and Devil's Ivy. The asylum is privately funded and run by a mysterious benefactor, so pretty much anything goes! If you want some advice, kid, don't f*ck up and find yourself at the mercy of the Wingman and the Concretestador. Their wounded egos can't handle much more than a mere mention of the good ol' days.



Art by Brian Hurtt

STARLOK & THE LIGHTRIDERS

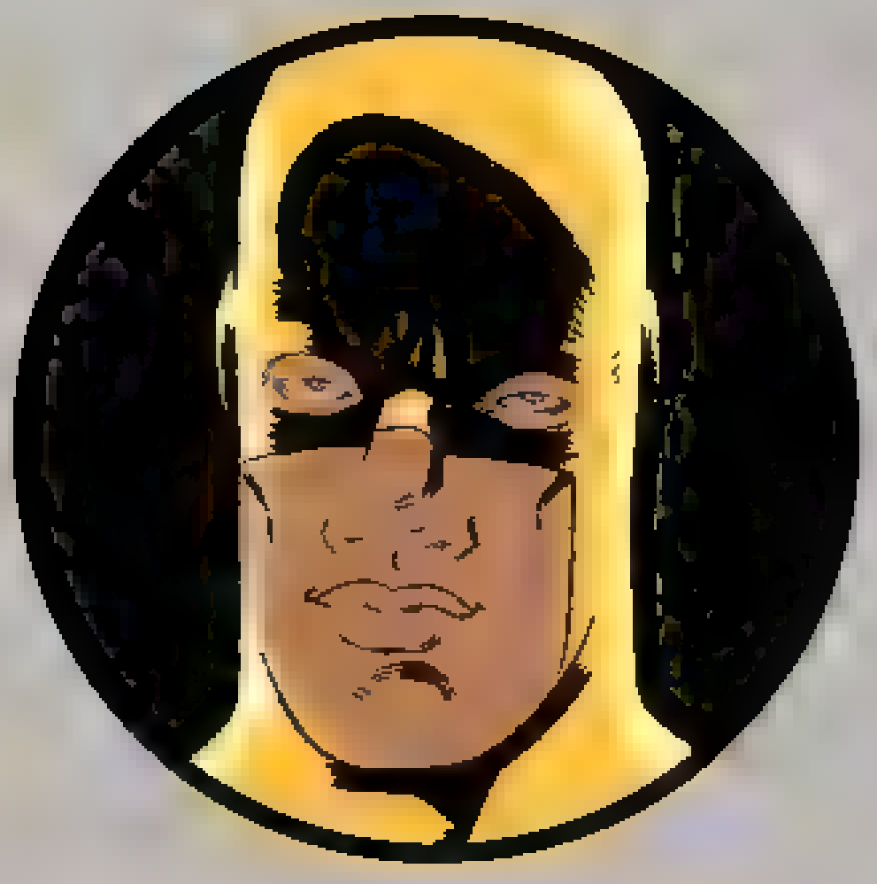
First Appearance: Black Hammer #1
Headquarters: *New World*

HISTORY
Since the beginning of time, Starlok has led the cosmic battle against evil incarnate—his dark twin, Anti-God (see "Anti-God")—holding a delicate balance within the multiverse. The Lightriders are his first line of defense: an esteemed, powerful collection of individuals with cosmic abilities. The Escaper! No prison or snare can contain him! Whiptara! The warrior priestess with an unwavering crew of wham-tastic Whamazons! The youngest Lightrider, Time-Boy, and his loyal pet, Warpie the Chrono-Pup! And the most powerful Lightrider of them all . . . Black Hammer (see "Black Hammer I")! Each member fills a role and a title that must always be upheld. The multiverse depends on it!

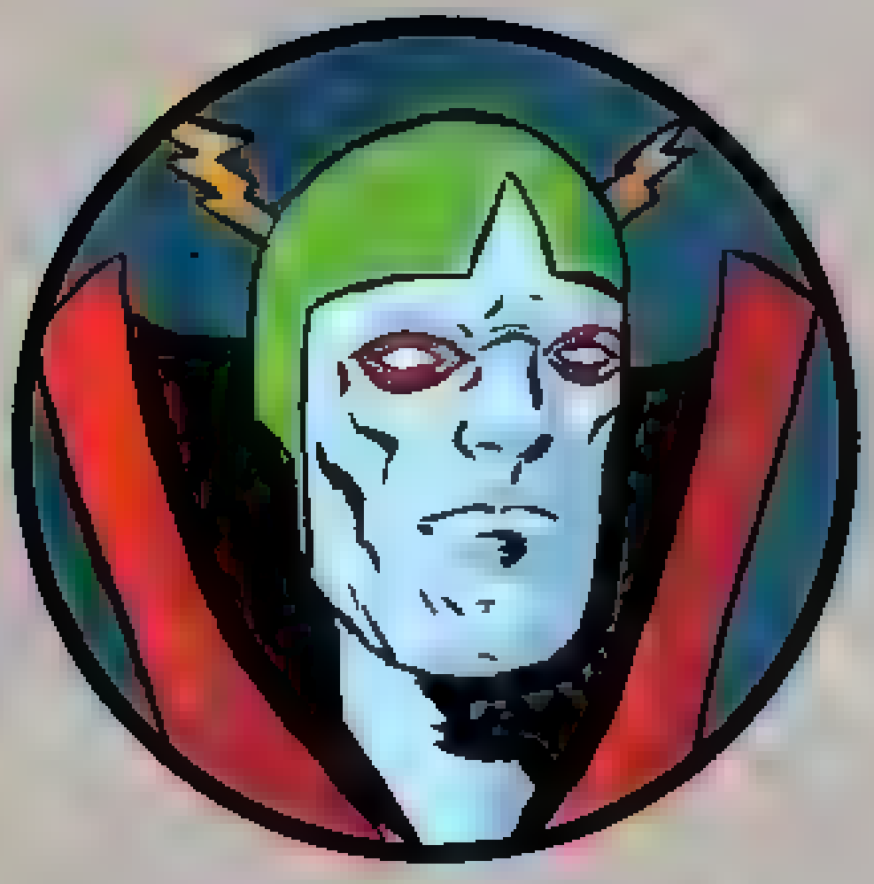
The Lightriders (sans Black Hammer) were the first to fall at Anti-God's all-powerful anti-feet. Their doom opened the gates for the first Cataclysm.

MEMBERS

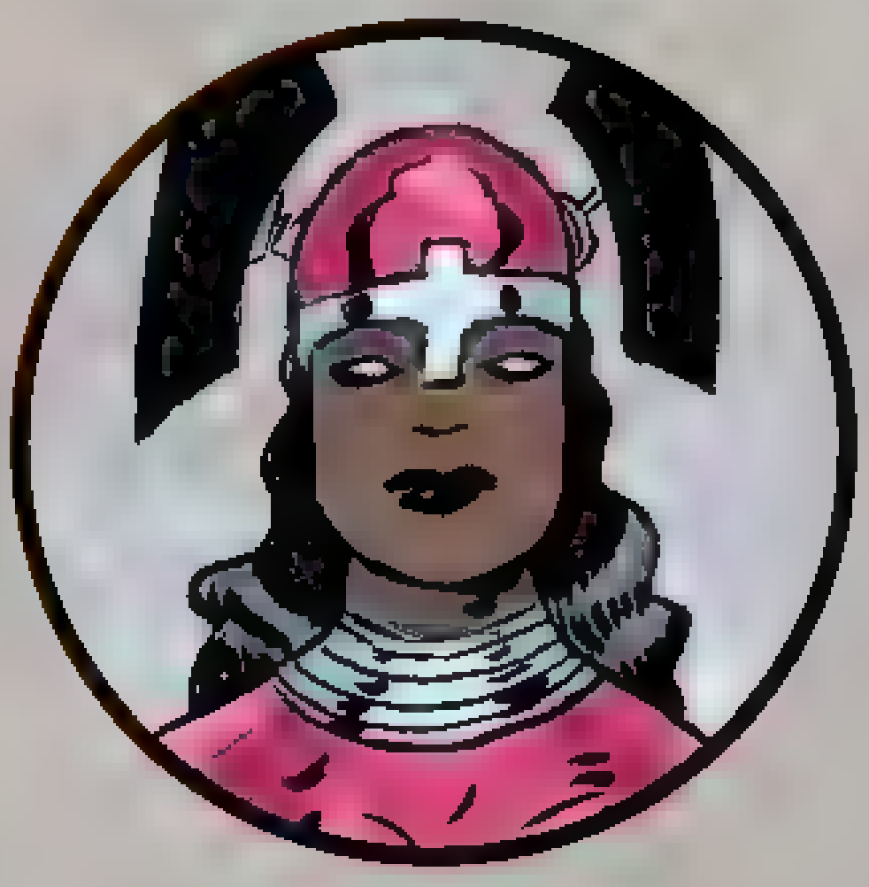
STARLOK



BLACK HAMMER I



THE ESCAPER



WHIPTARA & THE WHAMAZONS

TIME-BOY

WARPIE THE CHRONO-PUP

TALKY-WALKY

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *TLK-E WLK-E*
Occupation: *Interstellar Adventurer, Inventor*
Marital Status: *Single*
Known Relatives: *Archive (son)*
Group Affiliation: *None*
Base of Operations: *Moonbase 12*
First Appearance: Black Hammer *#1*
Height: *6'0"* ***Weight:*** *301 lbs*
Eyes: *None* ***Hair:*** *None*

HISTORY

Talky-Walky never fit in on her robot planet deep within the Osler star system. She grew up in New Technopolis and was a very inquisitive robot. She spent most of her time sending space probe satellites deep into orbit in hopes of discovering other signs of life. Instead of finding life, however, Talky began channeling television signals from a faraway planet called Earth. While the other robots harbored extreme hatred for non-silicon-based lifeforms, Talky-Walky fell in love with the humans that she broadcasted in secret. She studied humankind and longed to escape the robo-dictatorship on her own planet.

Taking matters into her own robo-hands, she sent a distress call into space hoping an earthling would find her. Subsequently, Colonel Randall Weird (see "Colonel Weird") arrived on the robo-planet! He was immediately met with hostility, and Talky came to his rescue. It was the beginning of a beautiful partnership.

Talky-Walky went on to join Colonel Weird on his interstellar adventures. They discovered the Para-zone together, but Talky was wise enough to never venture inside it herself. She fought alongside the other heroes to protect her beloved Earth from Anti-God (see "Anti-God") during the first Cataclysm. She joined the heroes in their disappearance, as well . . .

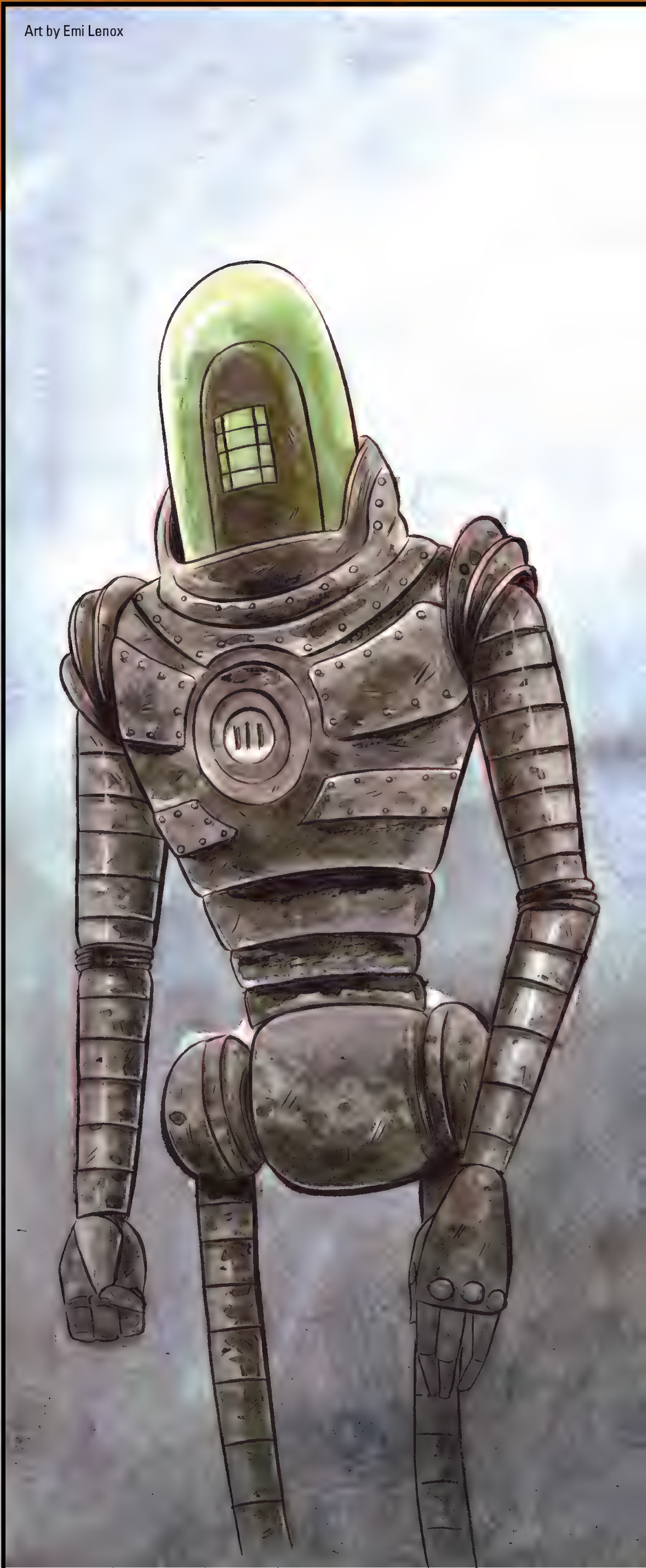
One hundred years in the future, Talky-Walky has given up all hope in humanity, especially since Colonel Weird abandoned her for a self-imposed exile at the end of time. In retaliation, she created her own sentient, mechanical planet, where she has spawned a family of her own that will never abandon her. Her son is Archive, one of the founding members of the Quantum League (see "The Quantum League")—and, while she won't admit it, she is **very** proud of him!

POWERS & WEAPONS

Talky's robotic body is capable of extreme strength and durability. Her AI is unparalleled in the universe, as she is in a constant state of updating her operating system. This grants her genius-level intellect and the most complex database of sourdough recipes ever assembled. She is extremely susceptible to electro-lasers—a weakness only known by her fellow robots and her best friend, Colonel Weird.

While Talky is much more of a lover than a fighter, she's not afraid to handle an OB6000 Z-thermal plasma-torch gun in the blazing heat of battle.

Art by Emi Lenox



SHERIFF TRUEHEART

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *Earl "Redd" Trueheart*
Occupation: *Police Officer*
Marital Status: *Divorced*
Known Relatives: *Tammy Trueheart (ex-wife)*
Group Affiliation: *Rockwood Bowling Club*
Base of Operations: *Rockwood*
First Appearance: *Black Hammer #1*
Height: *6'2"* ***Weight:*** *323 lbs.*
Eyes: *Blue* ***Hair:*** *White*

Art by Brian Hurtt

HISTORY

Trueheart is Rockwood's town sheriff and also the soon-to-be ex-husband of Tammy Trueheart (See "Tammy Trueheart"). He's suspicious of Abraham (See "Abraham Slam") and his family, but that's mostly because of Abe's blossoming relationship with Tammy. His investigation into Black Hammer Farm and Abe's family eventually led to him crossing paths with Madame Dragonfly (see "Madame Dragonfly")—who proceeded to turn him into bubbling goo. Abe, Tammy, and the rest of Rockwood quickly noticed the disappearance of Trueheart. His absence remained a mystery until he showed up at Tammy's restaurant in a chipper and overly supportive mood. He now embraces Tammy and Abe's relationship and only wants the best for them! This stark change in character is unsettling to them both.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Sheriff Trueheart is a regular, zero-powers human. In fact, he's remarkably underwhelming in every way. That's why Tammy filed her divorce papers! He does have a handgun, though, so there's that.

TAMMY TRUEHEART

PERSONAL DATA
Alter Ego: *N/A*
Occupation: *Waitress*
Marital Status: *Divorced*
Known Relatives: *Earl Trueheart (ex-husband)*
Group Affiliation: *Patti's Angels*
Base of Operations: *Rockwood*
First Appearance: *Black Hammer #1*
Height: *5'4"* ***Weight:*** *185 lbs.*
Eyes: *Blue* ***Hair:*** *Brown*

Art by Emi Lenox

HISTORY

Tammy is Rockwood's premier waitress working at the town's local diner. She was once married to the town sheriff (see "Sheriff Trueheart") but has since filed for divorce. Tammy also started a relationship with Abraham Slamkowski (see "Abraham Slam"). When Sheriff Trueheart was reported missing, Tammy became suspicious of Abe, since she knew that the two had recently come to blows. She called off the relationship with Abe, as she needed some time to think. The two reconciled, and, on the same morning, Sheriff Trueheart popped up outside of Tammy's workplace. He was in an especially good mood and confessed his support for Tammy and Abe's relationship. This act of goodwill was definitely out of place but seemed to put Tammy's heart at ease.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Tammy doesn't have any superhuman abilities, but she does flip a mean flapjack! She will beat your fine ass in checkers, too.

Art by David Rubín

THE UNBELIEVABLE UNTEENS

MEMBERS

JACK SABBATH

KID BOOM

SNAPDRAGON

STRAKA

STROBE

First Appearance: *"Horrors to Come" from* Free Comic Book Day 2019

HISTORY

Dr. Miles Moniker was an eccentric billionaire who made his fortune in pharmaceuticals. Moniker's only child, a daughter named Alexis, was always a loner, and her social awkwardness became even more dramatic when she developed superpowers at puberty. Her psychic abilities made her a "freak" amongst her classmates. Moniker soon sold his company and invested his money into finding and training similarly superpowered children from across the globe with whom Alexis could feel at home. Over the coming years, as he helped Alexis gain control of her powers, Moniker brought together several ostracized super teens to live and study in his mansion.

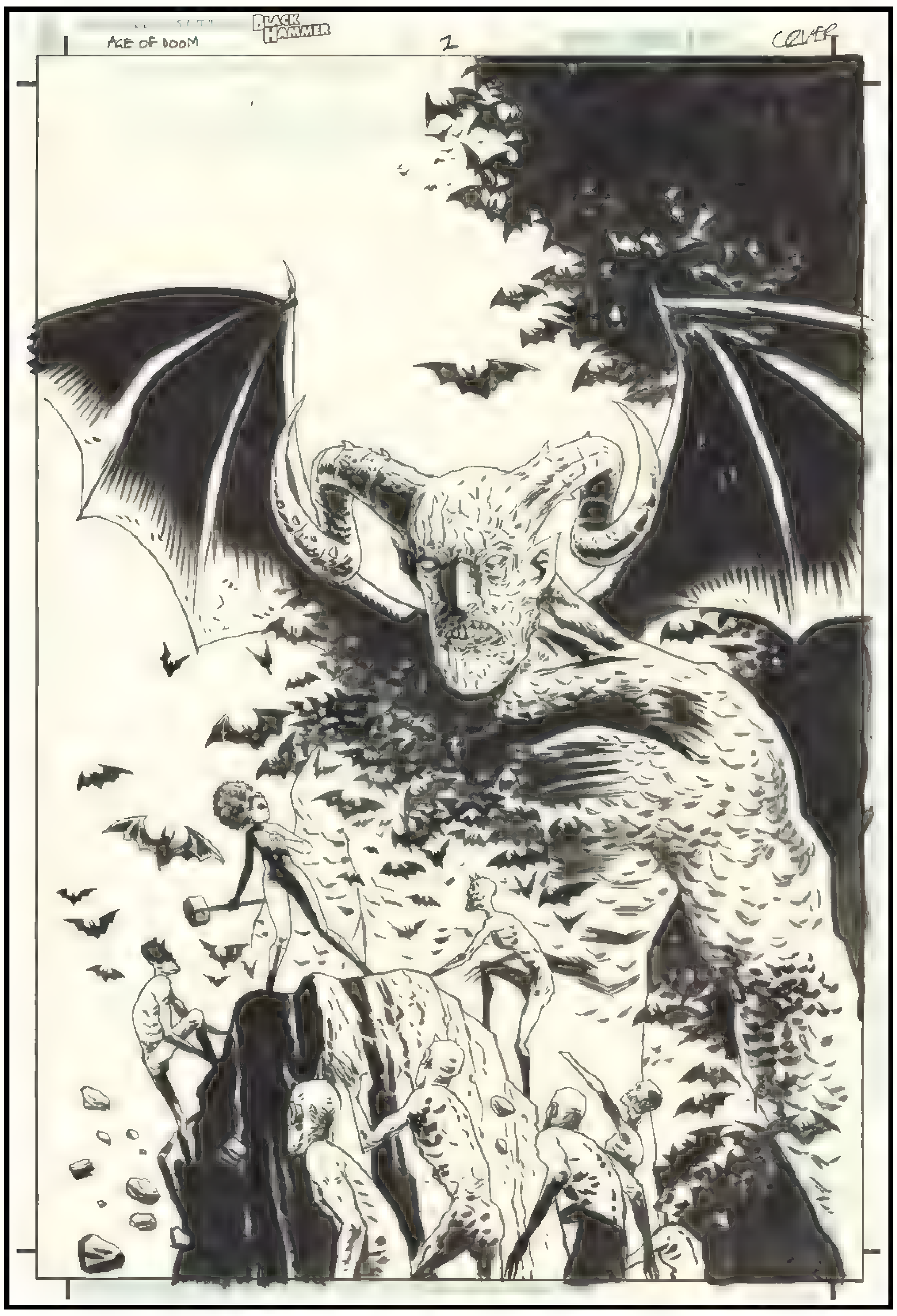
They were: Jack Sabbath, the wise-cracking boy wizard; Straka, the Czechoslovakian powerhouse; Kid Boom, the highly combustible hothead; Strobe, the dazzling damsel of light; and Alexis became Snapdragon, the mysterious beauty with a thousand minds. Together they defeated evil time and time again, becoming the teenage super sensations known as the Unbelievable Unteens. They were best friends and, in the case of Jack Sabbath and Alexis, even lovers. But all good things must come to an end, and, for the Unbelievable Unteens, it **did not** end well.

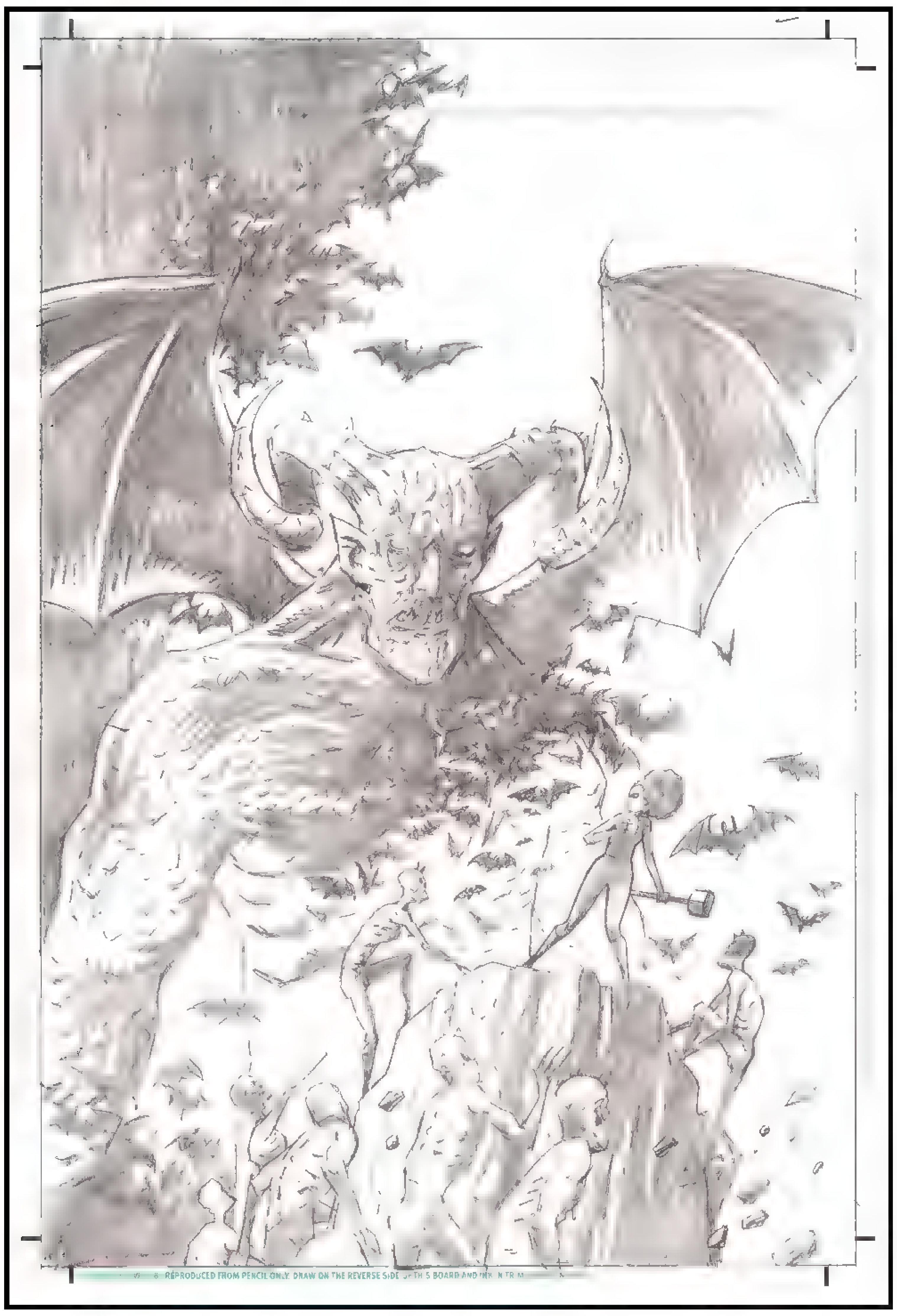
BLACK HAMMER™

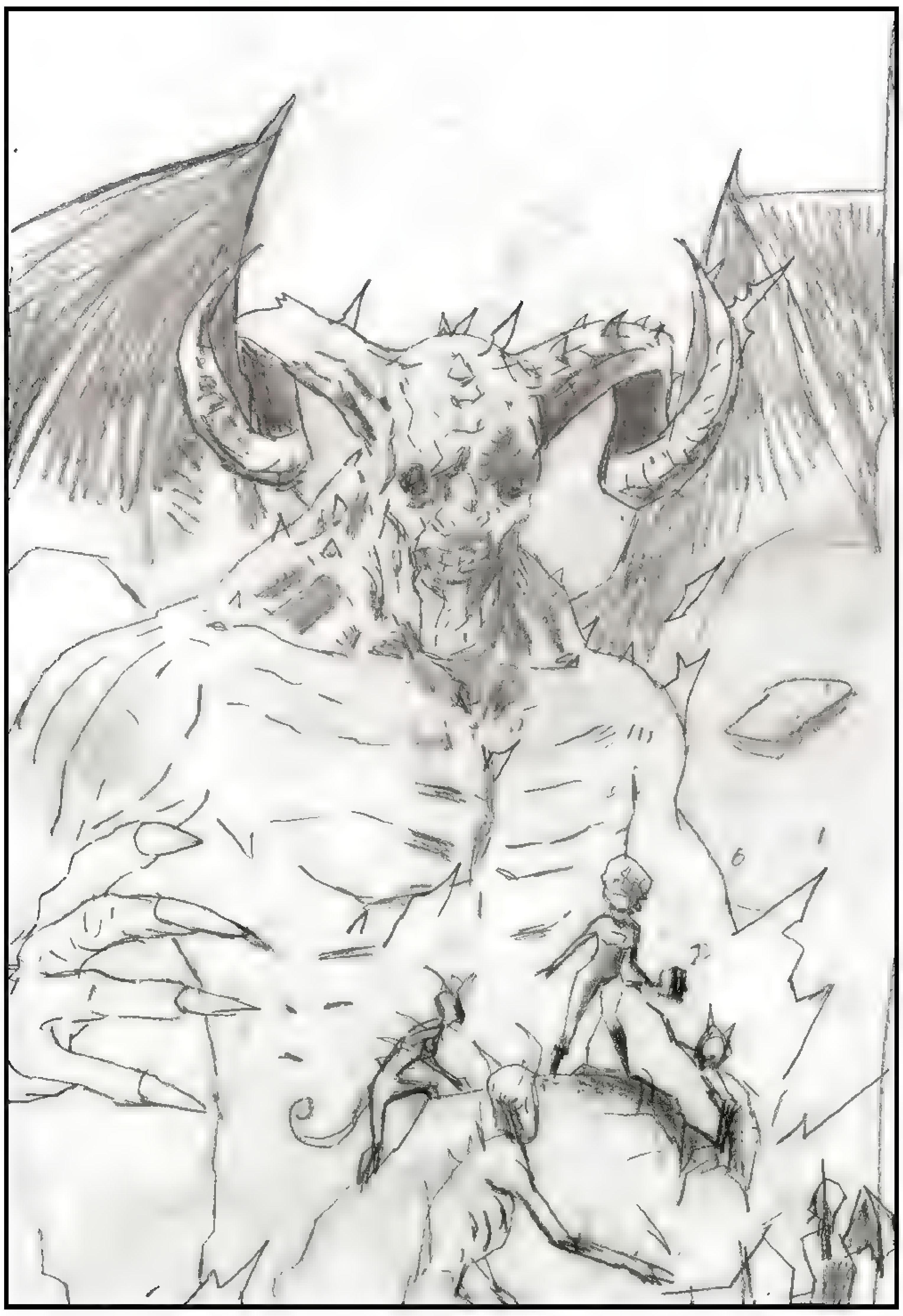
SKETCHBOOK

NOTES BY DEAN ORMSTON

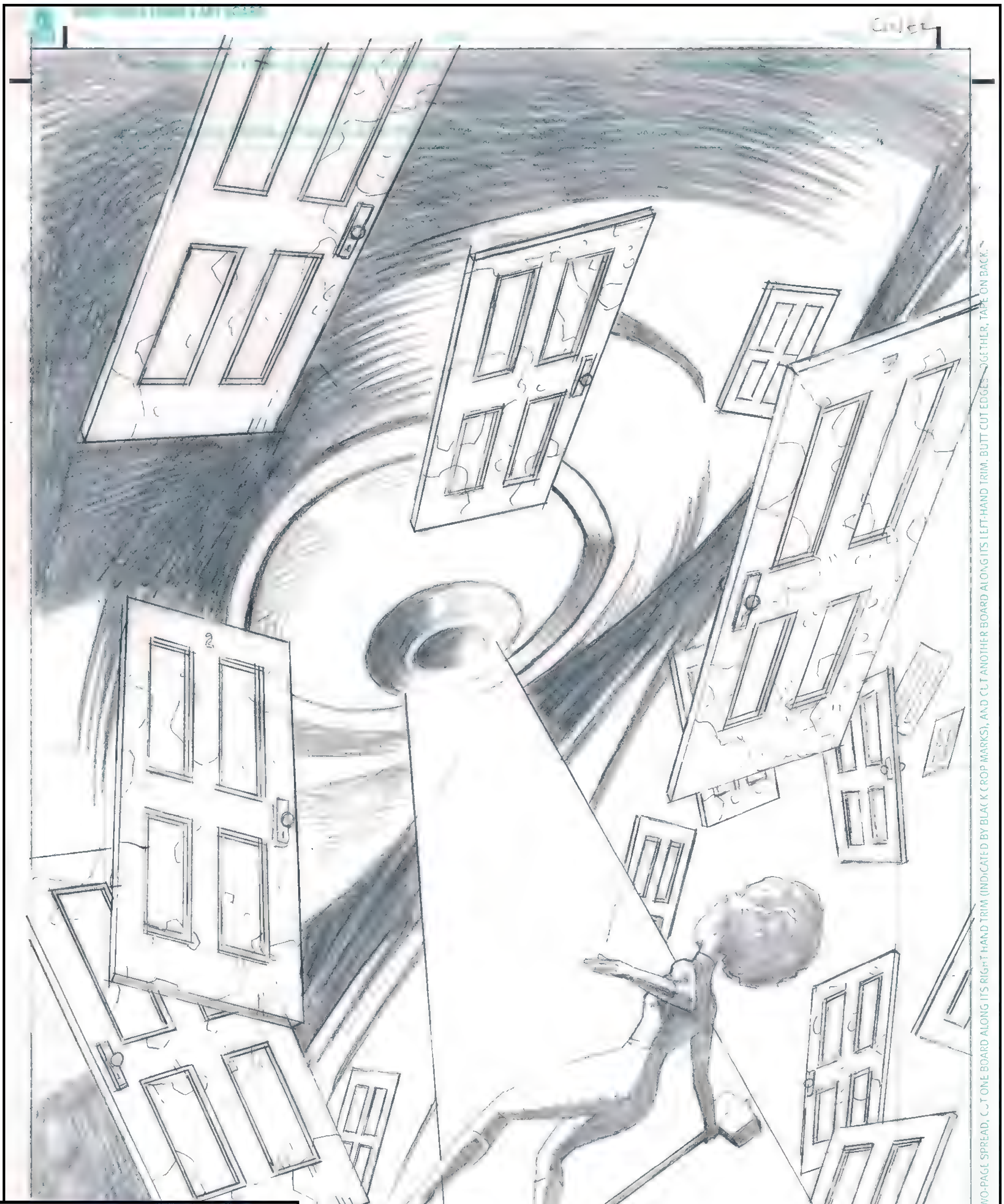
I had this image of a giant "other world" hand for an earlier cover, but decided against using it. With a little redrawing it made for a decent "mystery" cover.

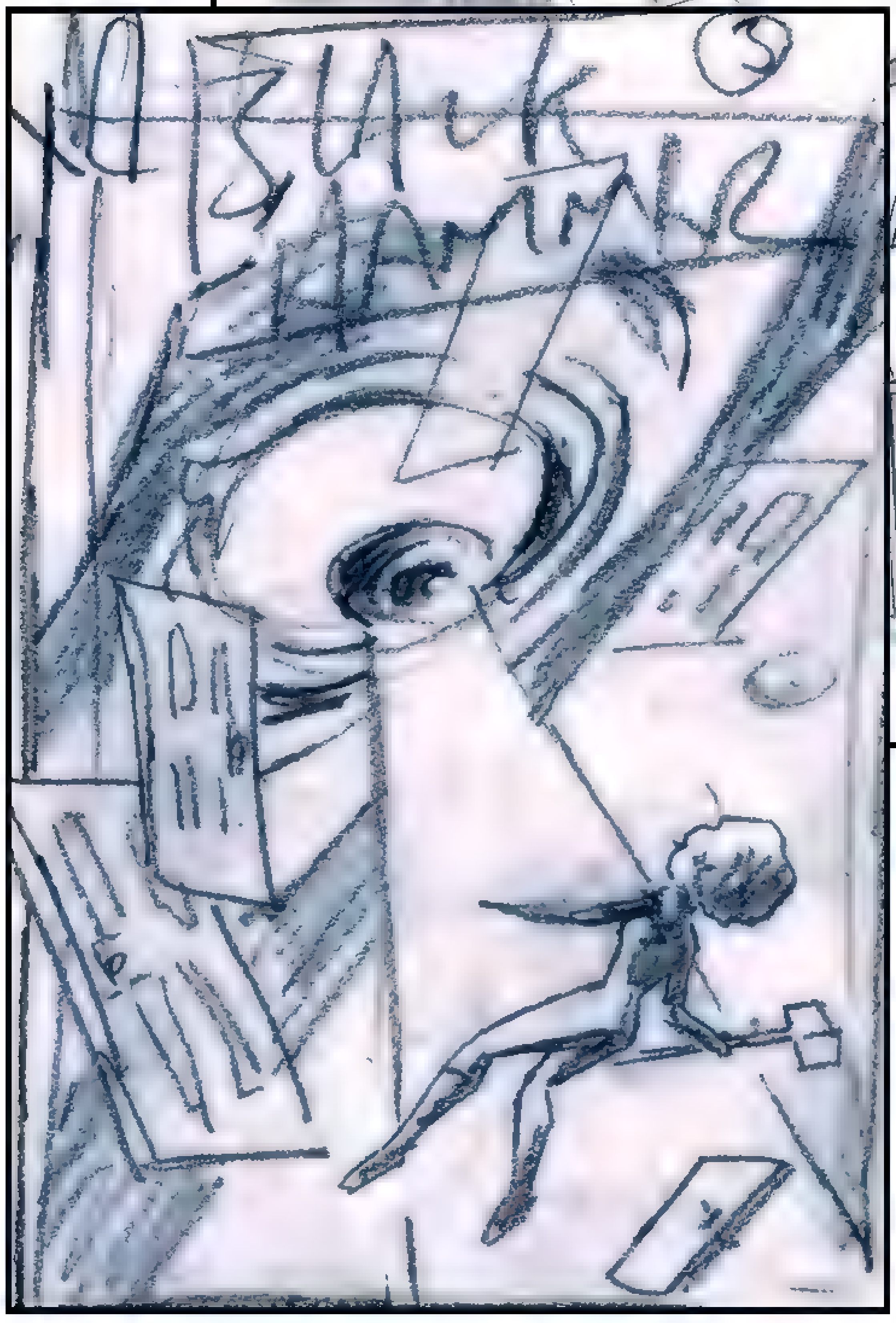






For most of my work these days I don't have the time to do that many sketches, so it's a great relief when a first sketch works well enough to go straight to pencils. This worked.

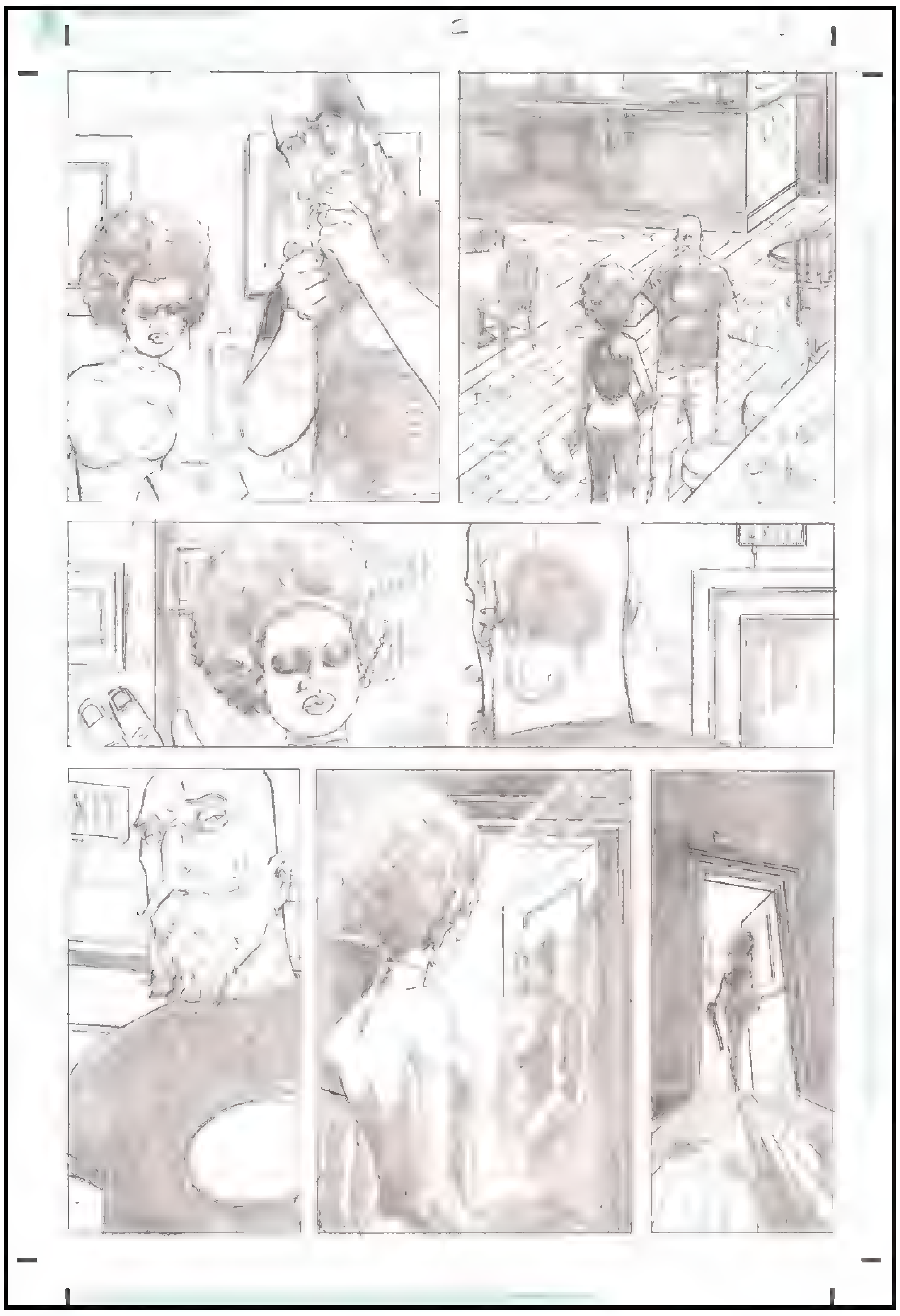

Cover
TO CREATE TWO-PAGE SPREAD, CUT ONE BOARD ALONG ITS RIGHT HAND TRIM (INDICATED BY BLACK CROP MARKS), AND CUT ANOTHER BOARD ALONG ITS LEFT-HAND TRIM. BUTT CUT EDGES TOGETHER, TAPE ON BACK.
2

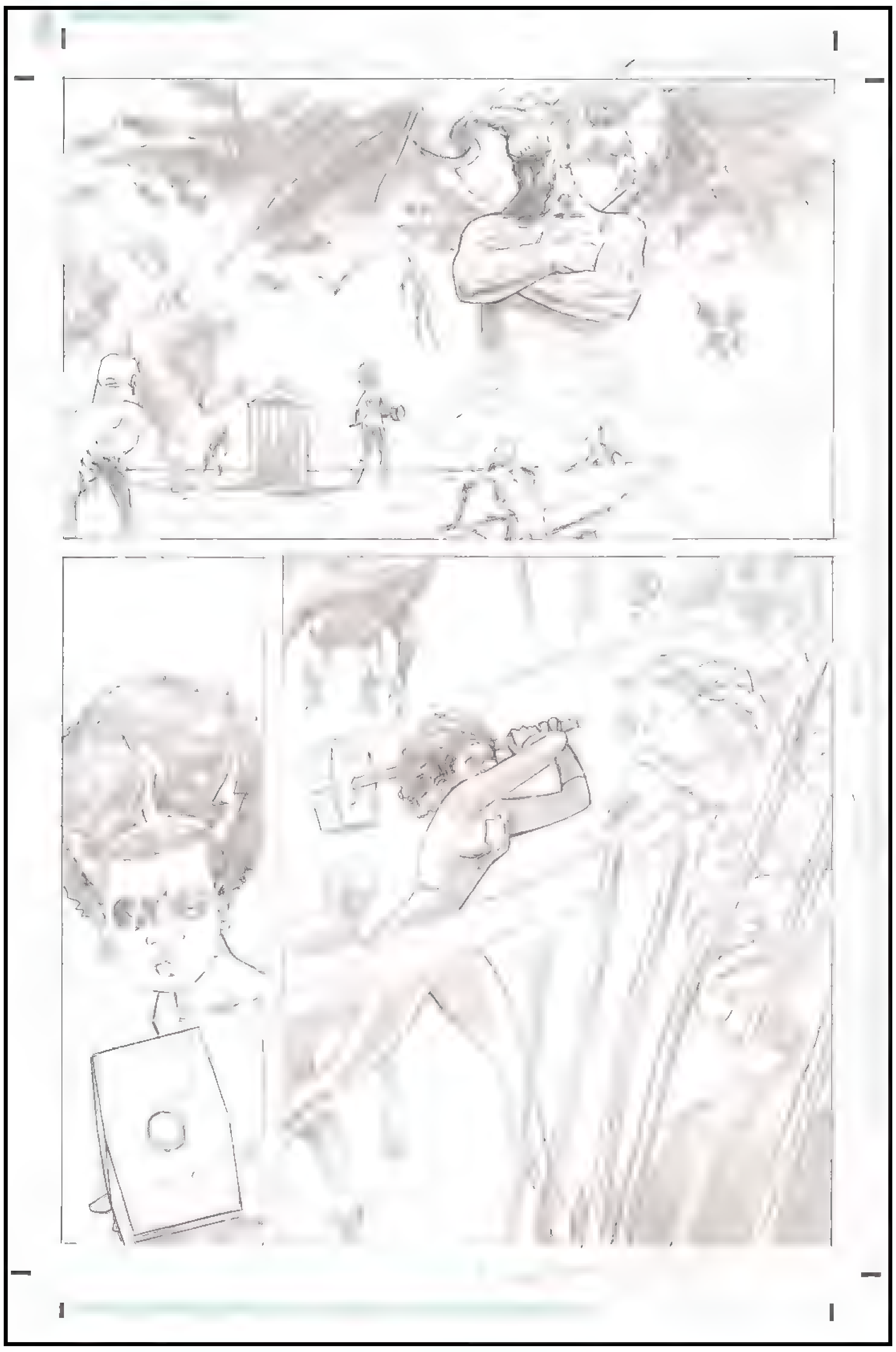


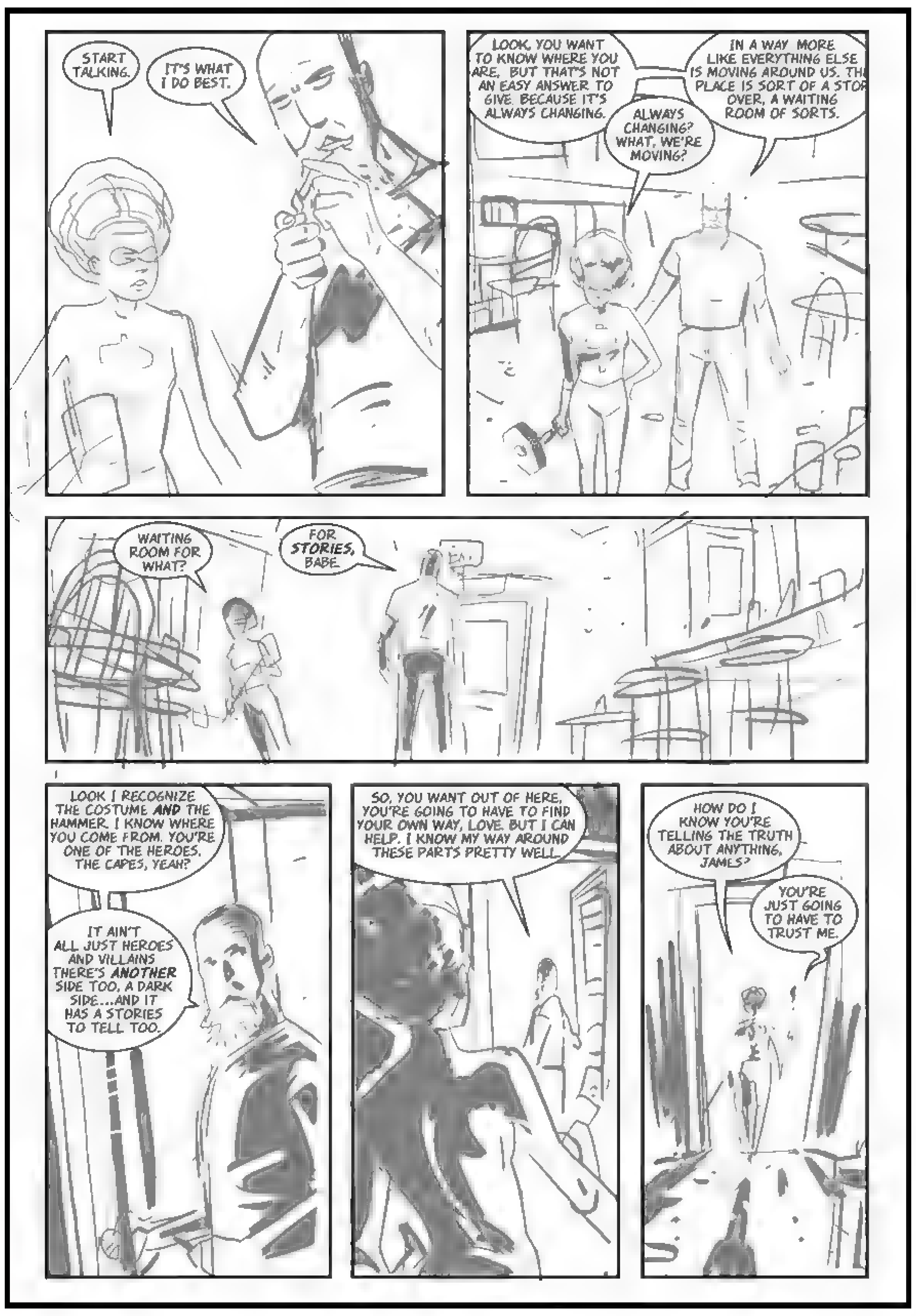
My main aim with this cover was to get a retro feel, so I took inspiration from Steve Ditko covers that he did for *Out of this World* and other Charlton titles. As with the previous cover, luckily for me the very first sketch had the simplicity and mood I was aiming for.

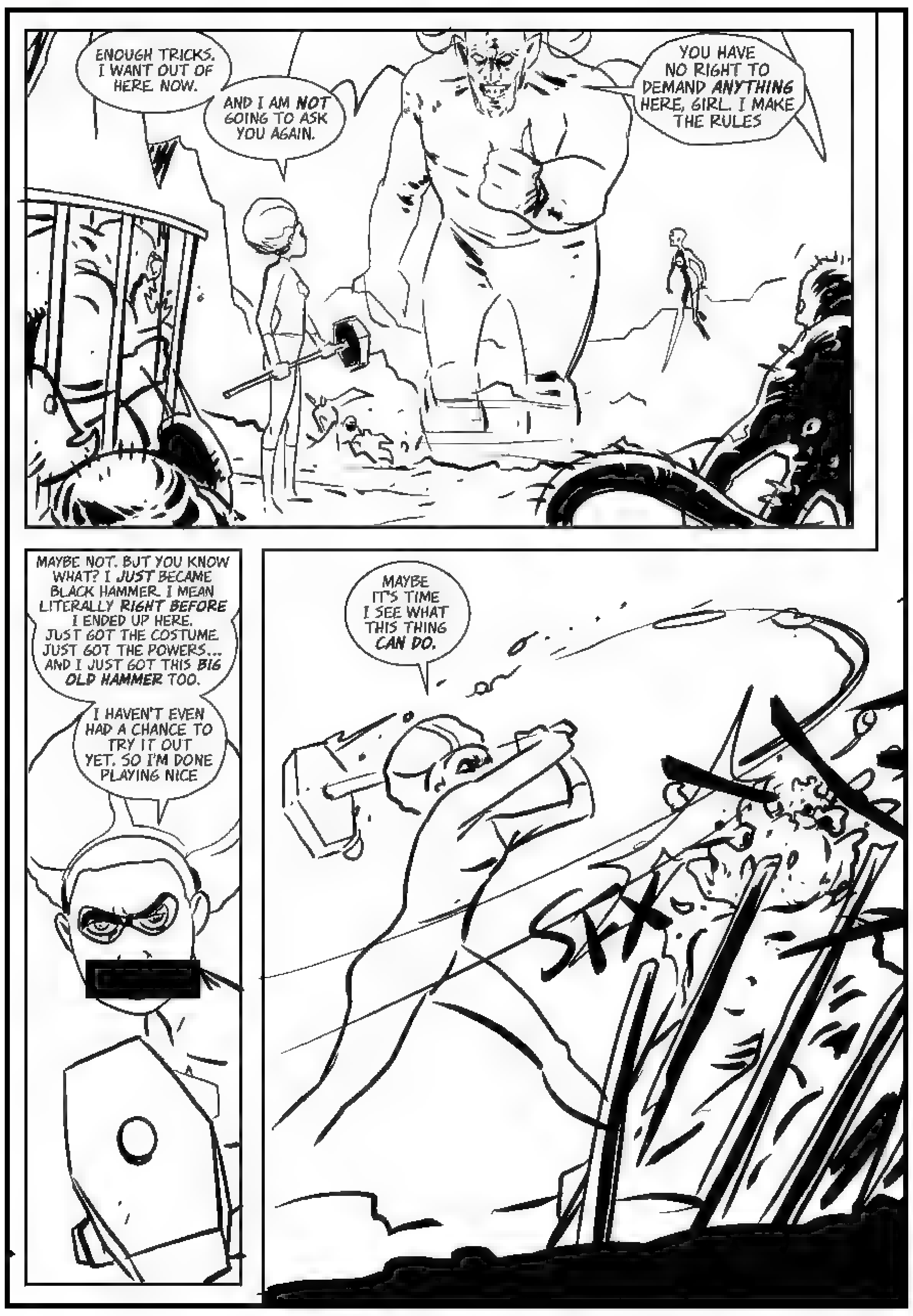
4
COVER
ART MUST FALL WITHIN THIS SOLID "LIVE AREA" BOX. THIS IS THE BORDER FOR A STANDARD, NON BLEED COMIC BOOK PAGE.

Hat trick; another first sketch that worked. The choice of focusing on Gail and Talky for this cover was an easy one. I also re-used an image of Gail that I had done for a cover sketch for volume 1.

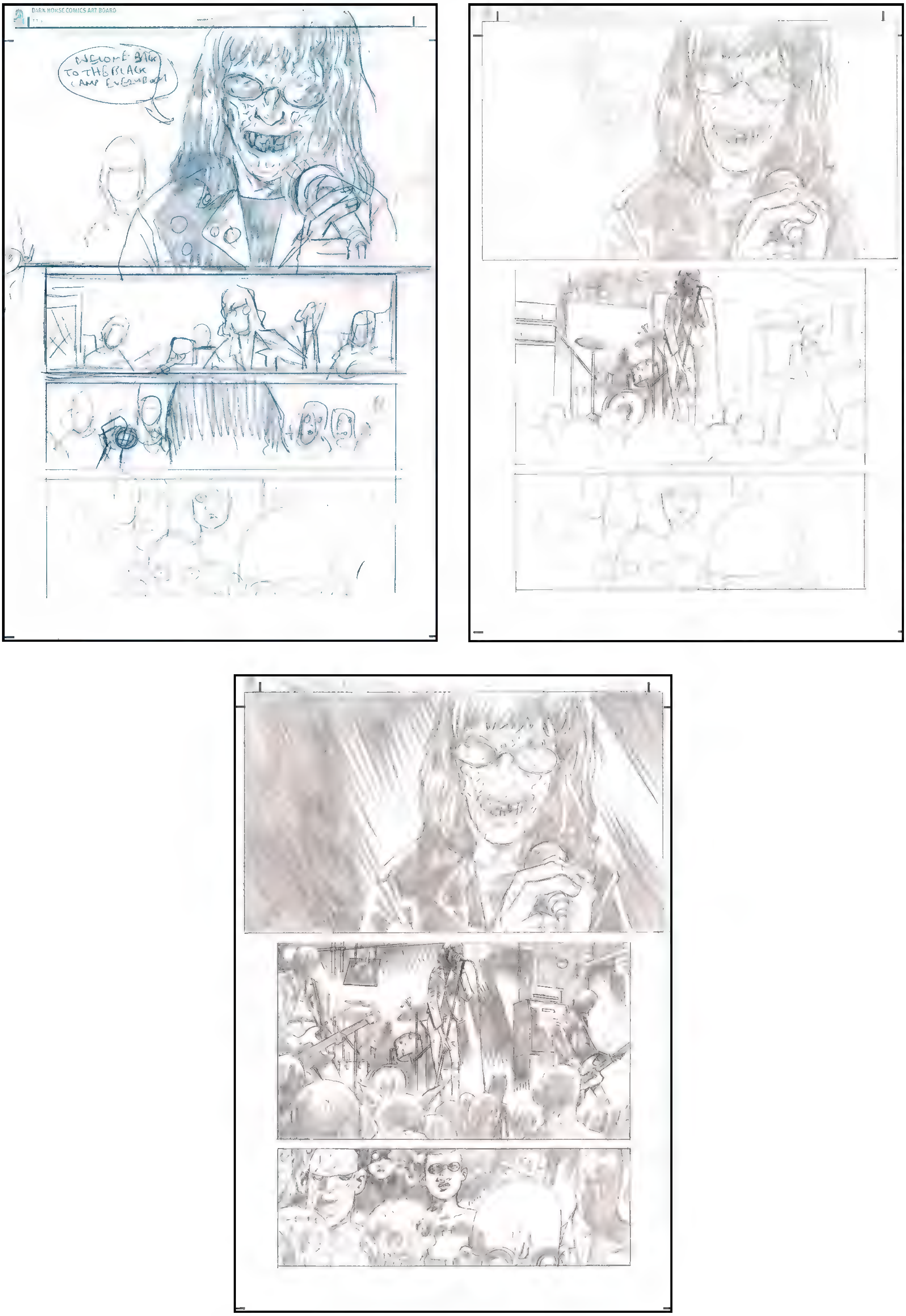





START TALKING.
IT'S WHAT I DO BEST.
LOOK, YOU WANT TO KNOW WHERE YOU ARE, BUT THAT'S NOT AN EASY ANSWER TO GIVE. BECAUSE IT'S ALWAYS CHANGING.
ALWAYS CHANGING? WHAT, WE'RE MOVING?
IN A WAY. MORE LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE IS MOVING AROUND US. TH PLACE IS SORT OF A STO OVER, A WAITING ROOM OF SORTS.
WAITING ROOM FOR WHAT?
FOR **STORIES,** BABE.
LOOK I RECOGNIZE THE COSTUME **AND** THE HAMMER. I KNOW WHERE YOU COME FROM. YOU'RE ONE OF THE HEROES. THE CAPES, YEAH?
IT AIN'T ALL JUST HEROES AND VILLAINS THERE'S **ANOTHER** SIDE TOO, A DARK SIDE...AND IT HAS A STORIES TO TELL TOO.
SO, YOU WANT OUT OF HERE, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FIND YOUR OWN WAY, LOVE. BUT I CAN HELP. I KNOW MY WAY AROUND THESE PARTS PRETTY WELL.
HOW DO I KNOW YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT ANYTHING, JAMES?
YOU'RE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO TRUST ME.

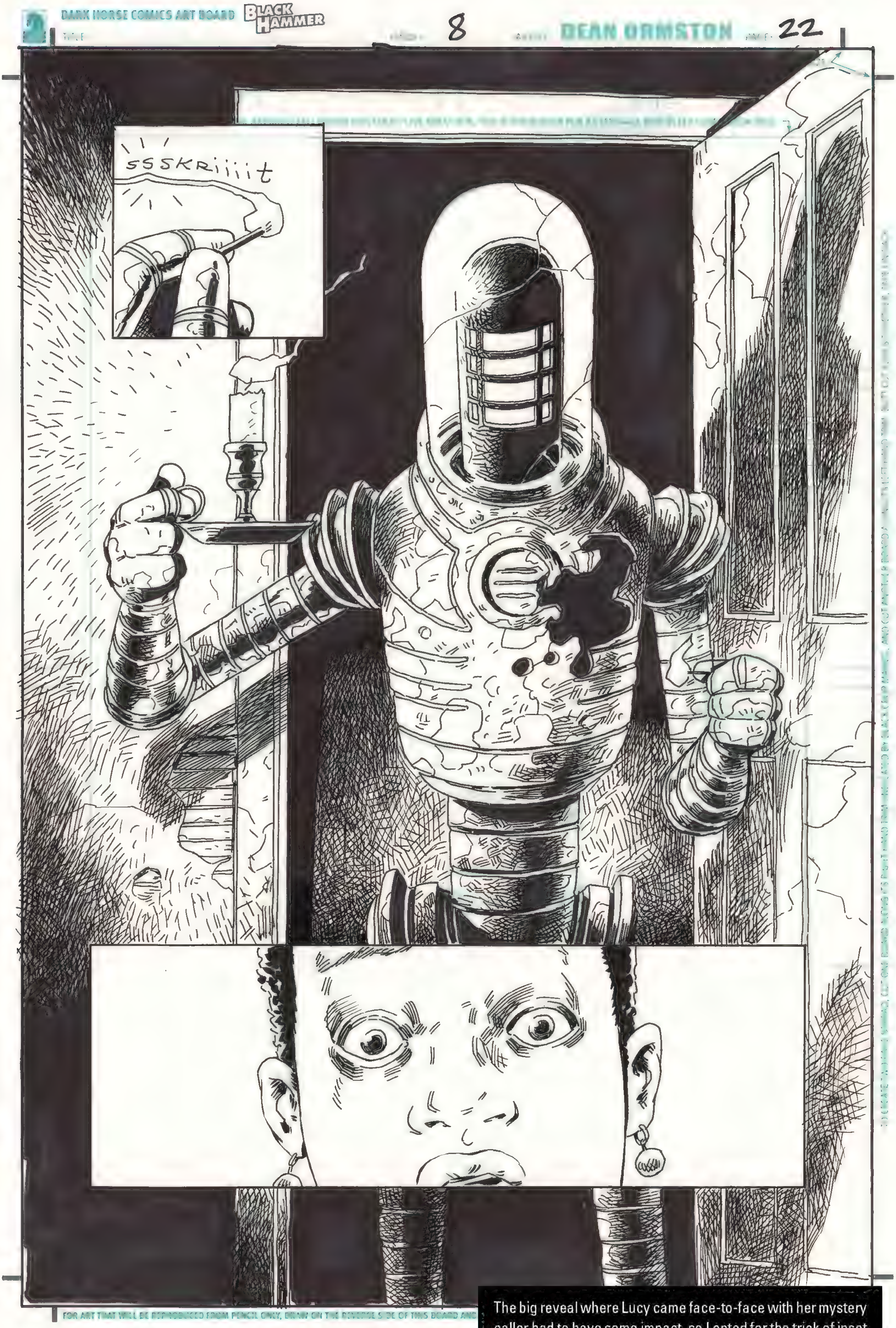

ENOUGH TRICKS. I WANT OUT OF HERE NOW.
AND I AM **NOT** GOING TO ASK YOU AGAIN.
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO DEMAND **ANYTHING** HERE, GIRL. I MAKE THE RULES
MAYBE NOT. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? I **JUST** BECAME BLACK HAMMER. I MEAN LITERALLY **RIGHT BEFORE** I ENDED UP HERE. JUST GOT THE COSTUME. JUST GOT THE POWERS... AND I JUST GOT THIS **BIG OLD HAMMER** TOO.
I HAVEN'T EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO TRY IT OUT YET. SO I'M DONE PLAYING NICE
MAYBE IT'S TIME I SEE WHAT THIS THING **CAN DO.**
SFX

Here's another example of Peter Gross breakdowns and my pencils. I had worked with Peter on the Vertigo comic *The Unwritten* where he supplied breakdowns and I used them as a springboard for the finished page; I liked working that way. This is another page where I stuck pretty close to Peter's roughs.


DARK HORSE COMICS ART BOARD
WELCOME BACK TO THE BLACK CAMP EVERYBODY

My rough pencils in progress and my finished pencils. One of the best things about working on a creator-owned book is the freedom allowed to indulge in one's own tastes, so I had good fun drawing an exaggerated, other world version of the Ramones. I figured Gail would be a huge Ramones fan.

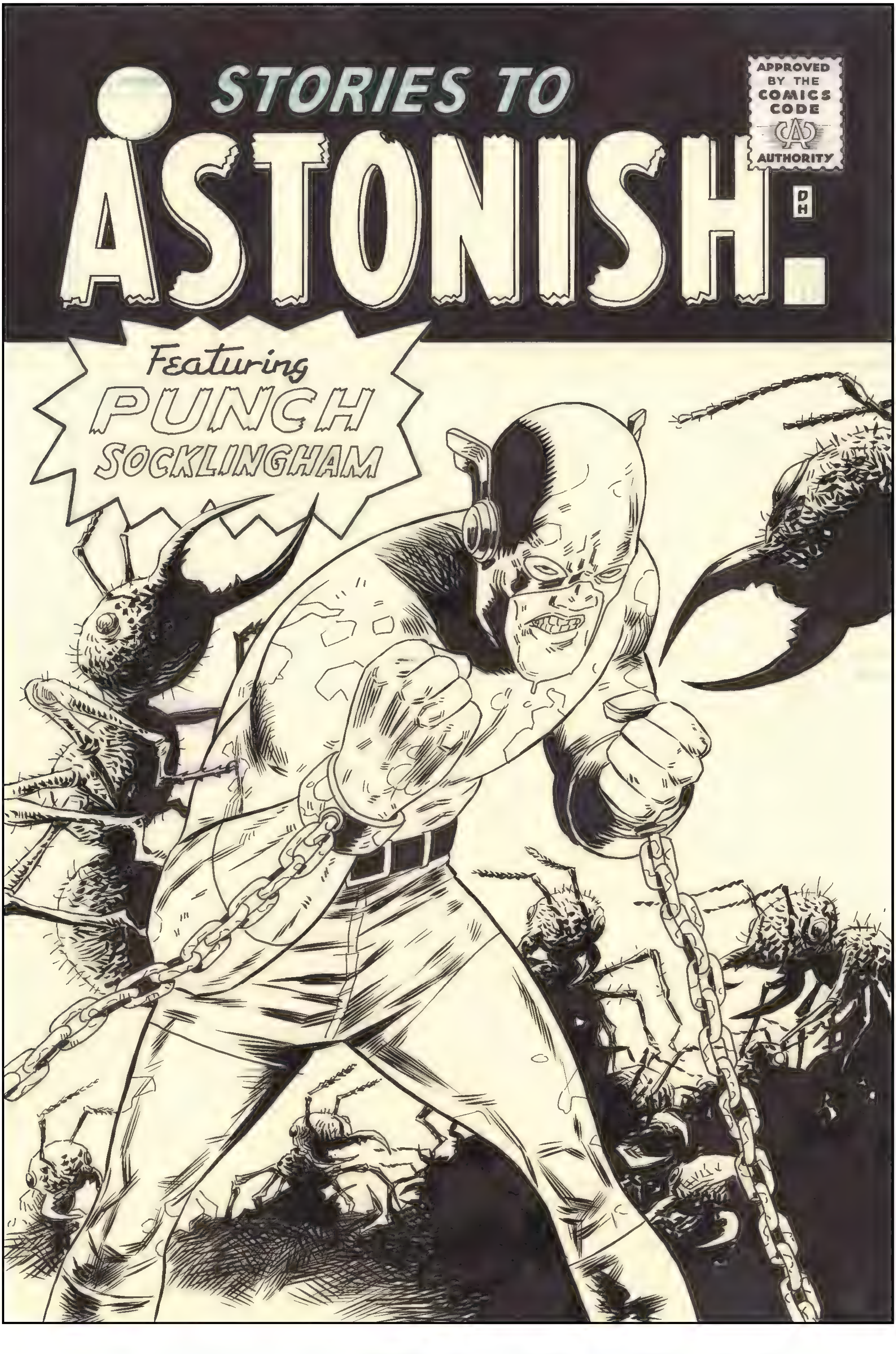
ALL LETTERING AND ESSENTIAL ART MUST FALL WITHIN THIS SOLID "LIVE AREA" BOX. THIS IS THE BORDER FOR A STANDARD, NON-BLEED COMIC BOOK PAGE
TUMBELTY
LY, DRAW ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS BOARD AND INK IN TRIM MARKS IN BLACK.
TUMBELTY


DARK HORSE COMICS ART BOARD
BLACK HAMMER
8
DEAN ORMSTON
22
SSSKRiiiit
FOR ART THAT WILL BE REPRODUCED FROM PENCIL ONLY, DRAW ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS BOARD AND

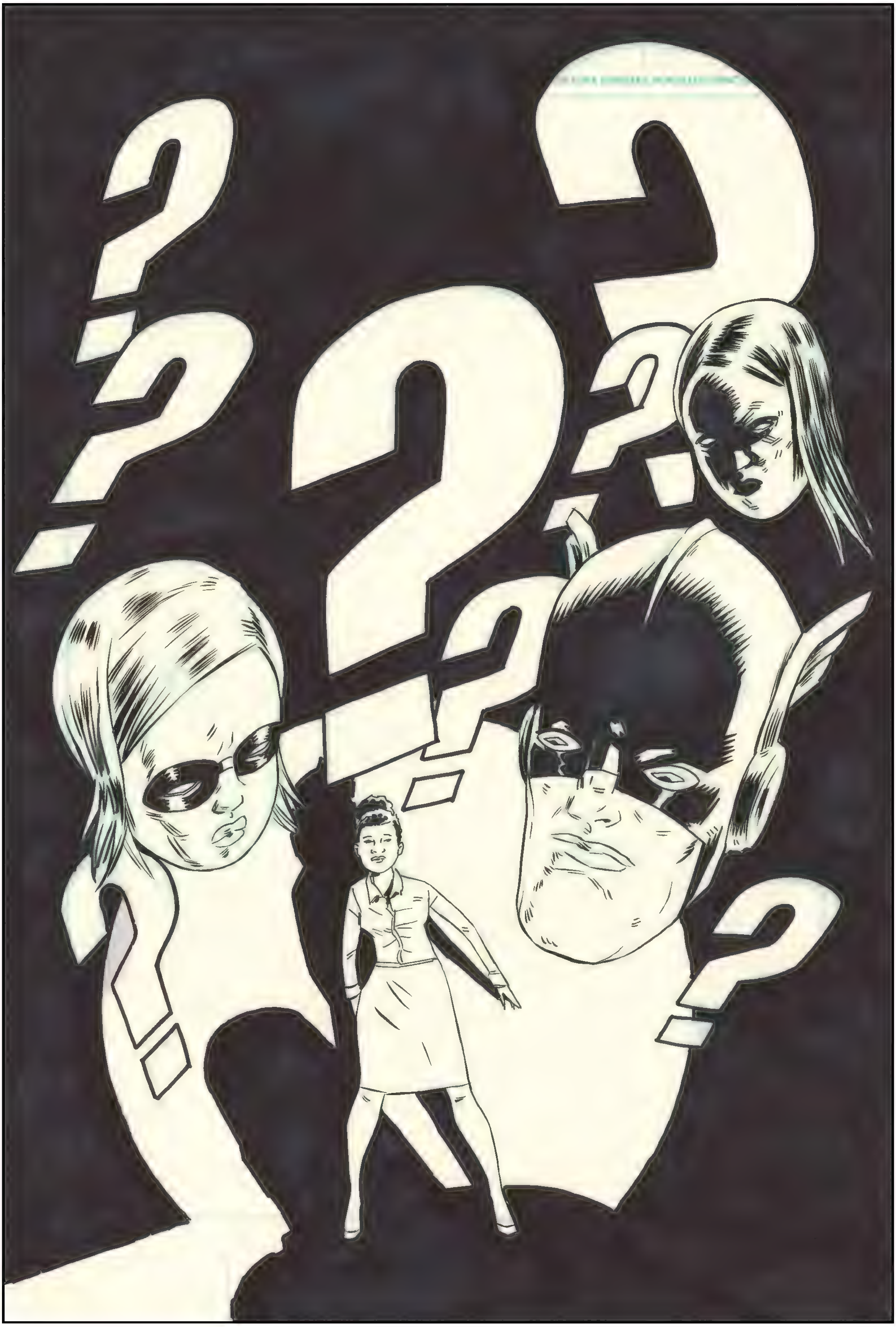
The big reveal where Lucy came face-to-face with her mystery caller had to have some impact, so I opted for the trick of inset panels with one large shot of Talky in candle light.

Although we had seen Spiral City in earlier episodes, we really wanted to show the decay of what was once a place of hope and wonder. Now it's oppressive and mundane—yet another place where Lucy and Abe seem to be trapped.

A lot of the time I rough out directly on the art board to work out balloon placement, making sure I leave enough room for Todd to letter. In this case my rough had enough detail to work into finished pencils with minimal reworking.



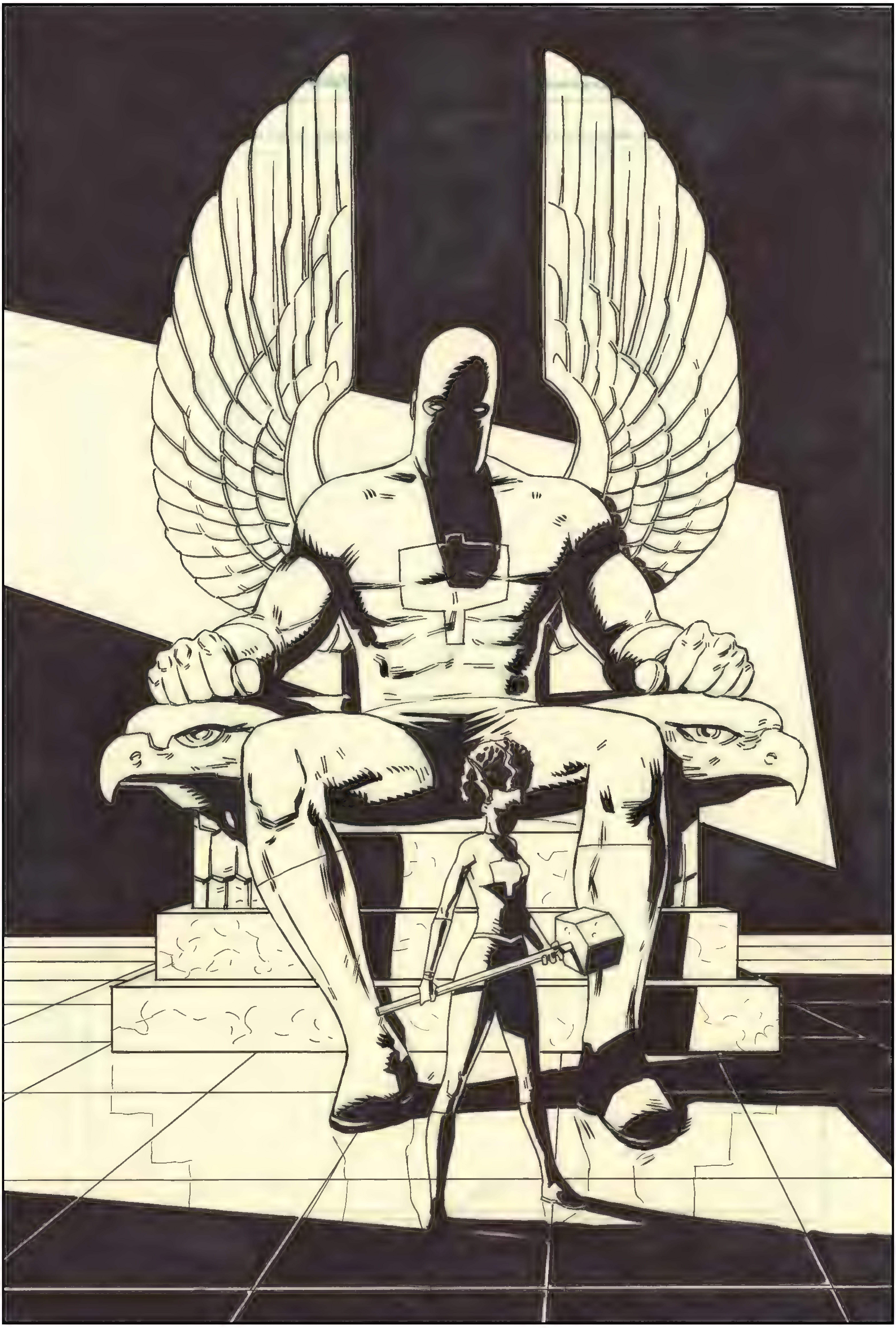
I have a real affection for Golden- and Silver-Age comics, and this was originally drawn just to use in the panel where Abe holds it in his hand on page 6. However, I got carried away and drew a full Golden-Age-size piece. I loved the retro feel so much I persuaded Daniel to indulge me by using the full image as a title page to issue 8, making the issue 23 pages in total.



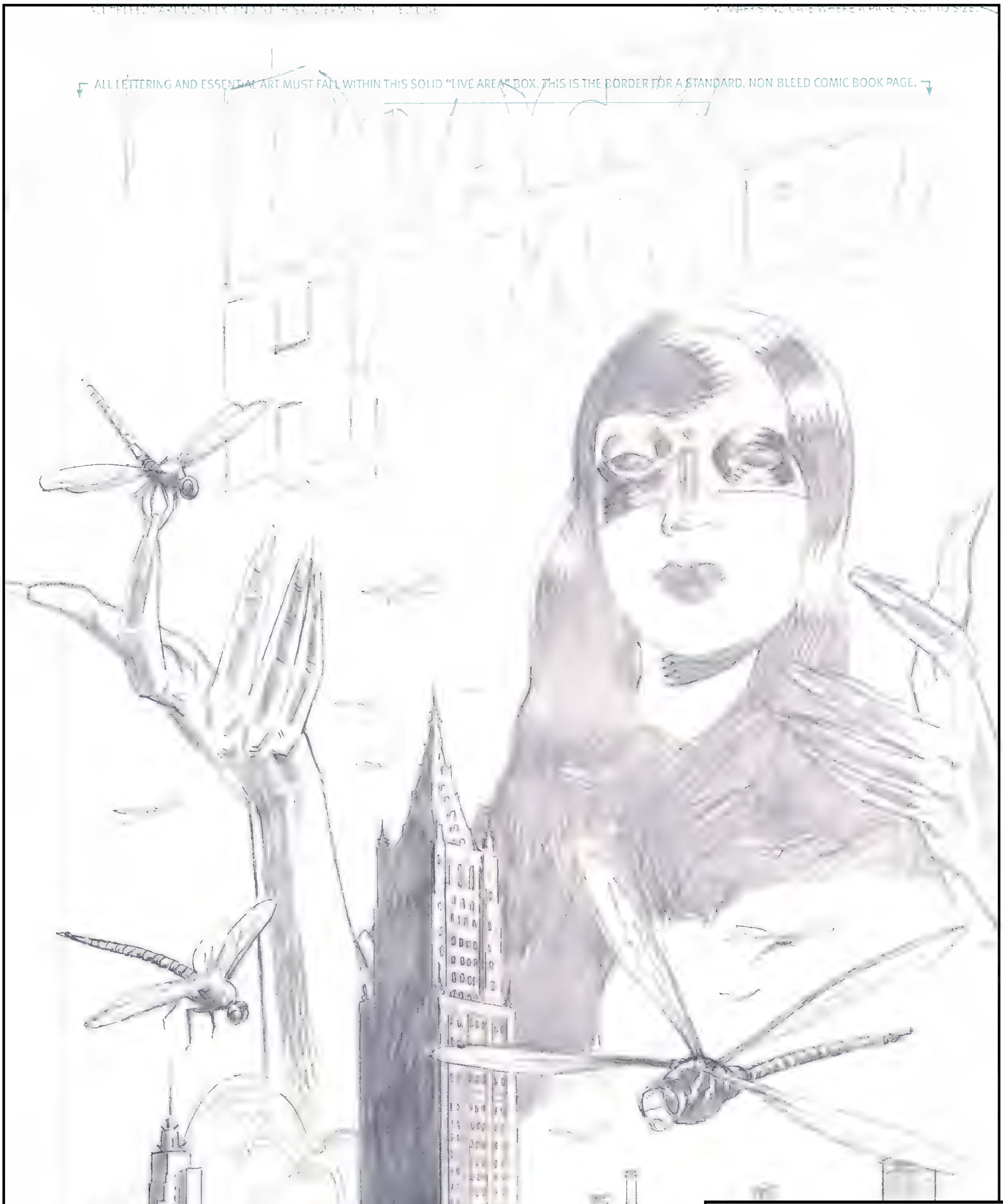
I had finished the cover to issue 8 but felt that Lucy lacked dynamism and decided to redraw her with more drama and a little bit more exaggerated. I still like the retro feel of both versions.

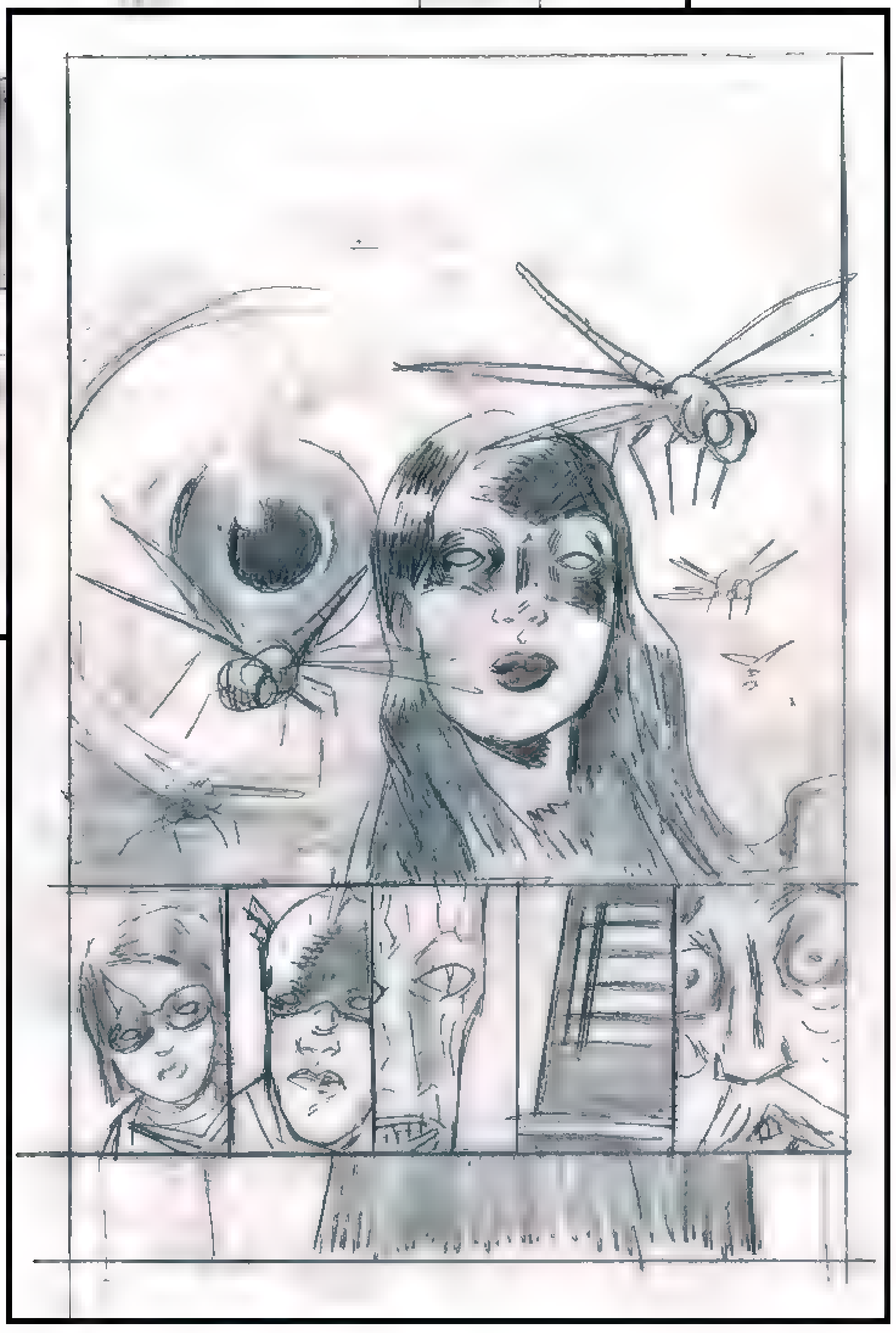
ALL "BLEED" ART MUST EXTEND TO THIS OUTERMOST DOTTED LINE.
TRIM MARKS INDICATE WHERE A PAGE IS CUT TO SIZE.
ALL LETTERING AND ESSENTIAL ART MUST FALL WITHIN THIS SOLID "LIVE AREA" BOX. THIS IS THE BORDER FOR A STANDARD, NON-BLEED COMIC BOOK PAGE.
BLACK HAMMER

Sometimes a small rough sketch works out so well it barely needs any alterations and this is one example. This idea of images set within a profile in silhouette has been used many times before and I couldn't resist adding to the list.



I don't consider myself any kind of superhero artist, so having the daunting task of trying to create an archetypal genre image of the two Black Hammers on a cover filled me with dread. However, drawn and rendered in my own lumpen way, this didn't turn out too bad.


ALL LETTERING AND ESSENTIAL ART MUST FALL WITHIN THIS SOLID "LIVE AREA" BOX. THIS IS THE BORDER FOR A STANDARD, NON BLEED COMIC BOOK PAGE.



With the final cover I had the idea to pay homage to some of the *Hellboy* and *B.P.R.D.* covers where an inset of images is used, and although I did like the rough sketch, I just couldn't seem to get it to work when I moved to finished pencils. So I took away the inset element to make room for the skyline of Spiral City.

Black Hammer: Age of Doom #1 Convention Exclusive Variant by James Stokoe

Black Hammer: Age of Doom #1 Diamond Retailer
Exclusive Variant by Rafael Albuquerque

Pinup for *Age of Doom* #4 by Lucy Sullivan

Pinup for *Age of Doom* #5 by Conner Herbison

Pinup for *Age of Doom* #5 by Antonio Fuso

Pinup for *Age of Doom* #6 by
Tyler Bence and Bruno Seelig

A Sci-Fi Experience That Will Blow Your Mind!
THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF COLONEL WEIRD
CAREY #2.018.
Tremendous Tales of Terror from the Para-Zone!!!
STORIES BY JEFF LEMIRE DEAN ORMSTON DAVE STEWART TODD KLEIN

Pinup for *Age of Doom* #8 by Becca Carey

Pinup for *Age of Doom* #8 by Flavia Biondi

Pinup for *Age of Doom* #9 by Rick Celis

Pinup for *Age of Doom* #10 by Rachel Allen Evans

JEFF LEMIRE is the award winning, *New York Times*–bestselling author of such graphic novels as *Essex County*, *Sweet Tooth*, and *Underwater Welder*, and cocreator of *Descender* with Dustin Nguyen, *Black Hammer* with Dean Ormston, *Plutona* with Emi Lenox, and *Gideon Falls* with Andrea Sorrentino.

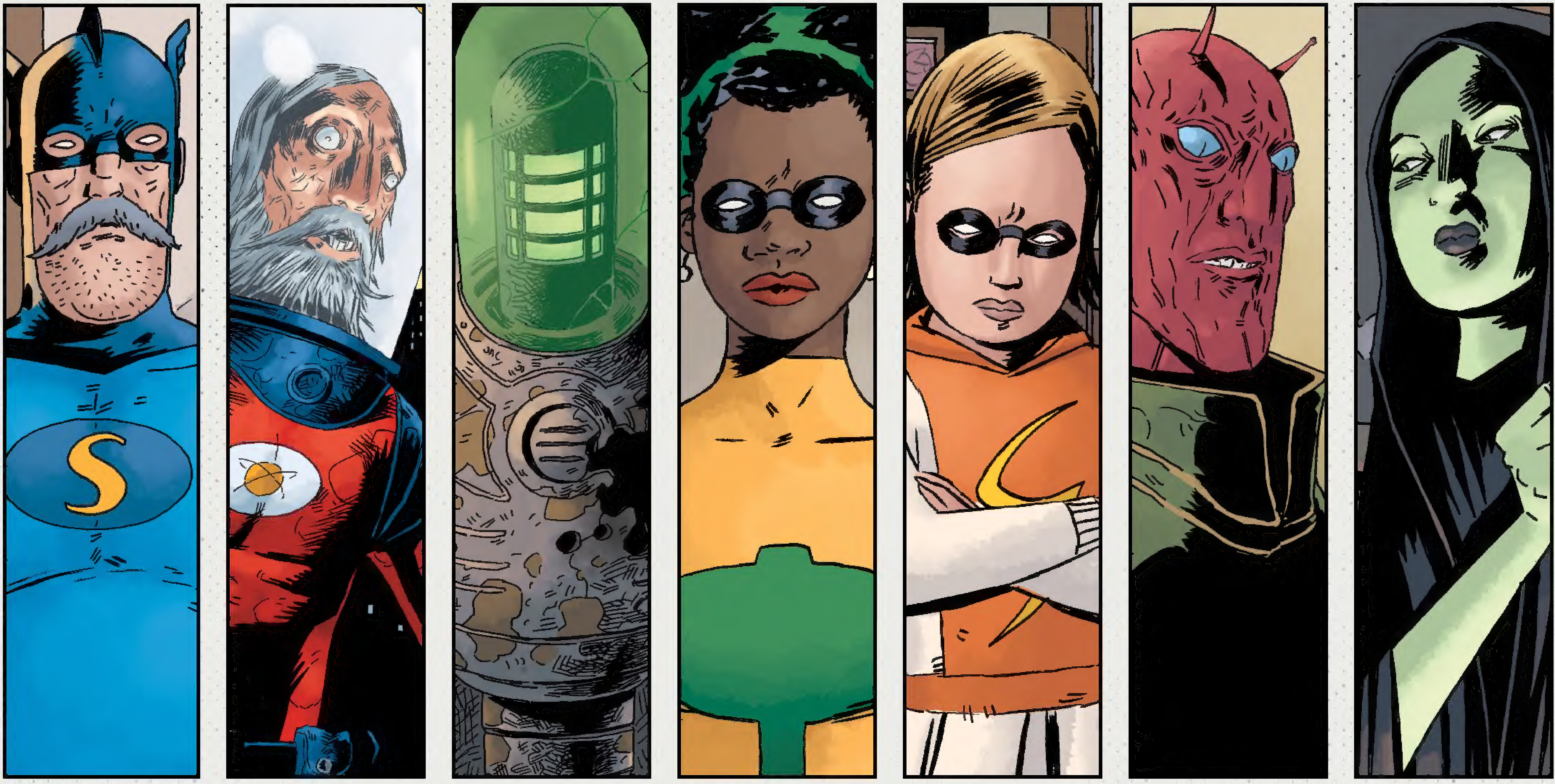
Many of Jeff's books are in active development for Film or TV, including *Essex County*, *Underwater Welder*, *Plutona*, *Gideon Falls*, *Descender*, *Family Tree*, and the *Black Hammer* universe at Legendary Entertainment with Lemire attached as screenwriter and executive producer.

Lemire's *Sweet Tooth* is currently being adapted into a Netflix series produced by Robert Downey Jr., set to be released in early 2021.

He lives in Toronto, Canada with his wife and son and their troublesome pug, Lola.

DEAN ORMSTON is a British illustrator who entered comics with *Judge Dredd Megazine* and *2000 AD* before moving onto work with Vertigo on *Sandman* with Neil Gaiman, *Lucifer* and *The Unwritten* with Mike Carey, *The Eaters* with Peter Milligan, *House of Secrets* with Steven T. Seagle, *Book of Magic* and *Bodies* with Si Spencer, and *Northlanders* with Brian Wood. He is currently working on his Eisner Award–winning series *Black Hammer* with Jeff Lemire.

THE LONG-AWAITED CONCLUSION TO THE HIGHLY ACCLAIMED, EISNER AWARD–WINNING SUPERHERO SAGA.



Torn from the Farm and faced with startling revelations about their last ten years, the Black Hammer crew, stripped of their identities, must race to prevent a universal meltdown and make hard sacrifices for the sake of existence itself!

Meanwhile, a Lovecraftian teen finds there is a hefty price she must pay to become "normal."

Collects *Black Hammer: Age of Doom* #1–#12, *Black Hammer: Cthu-Louise*, and *The World of Black Hammer Encyclopedia* in a deluxe, oversized hardcover format with a new cover, sketchbook extras, and more!

5/5 —*IMPULSE GAMER*

5/5 —*POP CULT HQ*

10/10 —*YOU DON'T READ COMICS*

10/10 —*DOOM ROCKET*

5/5 —*MONKEYS FIGHTING ROBOTS*

5/5 —*COMICBOOK.COM*

10/10 —*ADVENTURES IN POOR TASTE*

DARK HORSE BOOKS

SON OF ULTRON